

Lings without castles

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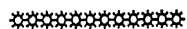
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KINGS WITHOUT CASTLES

Books by LUCY HERNDON CROCKETT

The Magnificent Bastards

Popcorn on the Ginza

KINGS WITHOUT CASTLES

By Lucy Herndon Crockett

*Spain is a dream world, steeped in
mysticism, locked in tradition, charged
with violence, inhabited by the most
delightful, the most courtly, the
most gracious, barbarians.*

SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR

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Introduction

THIS IS AN INFORMAL REPORT on the Spain of today and its people, as an American woman found them.

To me the very words "Spain" and "Spaniard" have long been loaded with romance. As an Army officer's daughter I had often crossed the trail of Spanish influence in Central and South America, along our Texas border, and in that once most far-flung possession, the Philippine Islands. My father spoke the language perfectly, and I shared his respect for this nation which had once controlled so vast an empire, and left such a powerful impress wherever its people traveled.

Twenty years ago the Spanish Civil War hurled Spain temporarily into the forefront of public interest. Today our Military Agreement with Franco, for lease of bases in a joint defense operation against Communist aggression, again brings Spain to the fore. But the picture behind the headlines remains obscure; the point of Europe's mainland closest to the Western Hemisphere, this peninsula, curiously, is the section of Europe we know least about.

It is astounding how much of a mystery Spain has remained. In North America and continental Europe Spaniards are an exotic breed. The truth is, for several hundred years there simply have not been many Spaniards at large outside of Spain beyond certain well-worn grooves leading to the former colonies. To the rest of the world the

Spaniard, whether he likes it or not, is a decided curiosity.

Nor, until now, have foreigners in any quantity found their way to Spain. The extent to which this corner of Europe has been isolated from the world is difficult to grasp. Political unrest in the early thirties and the Spanish Civil War, followed by World War II and a decade of mutual wariness between this last of the fascist brotherhood and the democracies, successfully cut travel to and from this country.

Now, at last, the doors are opened. For reasons financial and otherwise, not many Spaniards have as yet had the opportunity to go out, but thousands of outsiders are pouring in. Never since Napoleon's armies were pushed back into France more than a century ago has Spain been so overrun by foreigners.

In addition to the swarms of tourists—each year doubling the number of the last—our Military Agreement with Spain has brought in hundreds of specialists, contractors, and advisers, many of them with their families, plus a growing stream of military personnel to man the new air and naval bases.

And there is a thickening flood of transients: quick-trip businessmen with or without wives; congressmen and like bigwigs on official junkets; and assorted others to whom Madrid is now a required stop on any whirlwind tour of Europe. Many arrive with as vague ideas about Spain as the woman who, as she got off the plane at Barajas Airport, asked: "Who is king here?"

My own knowledge of Spain was limited, literally, to the following: what I could remember from *Don Quixote*; the (French) opera *Carmen*; the bullfight (via Mexico); and some confused impressions of the Spanish Civil War.

I began reading, indiscriminately: Madariaga, Ortega y Gasset, J. B. Trend, Emmett J. Hughes, Havelock Ellis; Sitwell, Pritchett, former ambassadors Bowers and Hayes; the delightful account (*The Bible In Spain*) by the Englishman, George Henry Borrow, of his travels in the 1830's; Hemingway again; and such magazine articles as I had time for.

I took with me to Spain as few prejudices as I had preconceptions. I found it difficult to be disturbed over the political picture of a country so far removed from my own world. Our only legitimate interest in

Spain, it seemed to me, was the purely practical one of having a stable, non-Communist military ally on this strategic bit of terrain. I did not (and still do not) feel it is our concern how any other people run their country—so long as their experiments do not constitute any threat to our own way of life; I would be the first to take exception if the Spaniards or anyone else tried to dictate what is right and proper for the people of the United States. But to take an objective interest in what goes on inside Franco Spain is not only natural, it is, to me, irresistible! Here is a nation only now stirring out of three centuries of isolation—a medieval setting for Jet Age activities.

Those fortunate enough to know Spain better than I may be critical of any report from one who has spent barely nine months in the country. But during that time I traveled by car into its every corner, at first alone and then as chauffeur and guide to relatives who arrived by relays. I talked to all types encountered along the way, to men and women of every political faith—bearing in mind, always, as I noted what they said, my sources of information and the Spanish propensity for embroidering a story. Driving across the great, sparsely inhabited stretches that make up most of Spain I developed some provocative theories . . . which could be very wrong.

I should forewarn my readers that many of these purely personal observations may appear at first encounter to contradict themselves. The Spaniard is in fact a composite of extremes; he is everything that has ever been said about him, and he is also its opposite. Few who have the opportunity to study him can resist trying to reconcile these apparent contradictions within the Spanish nature.

On this limited trip my interest was more in plazas and market places than in museums and cathedrals. The art of a people is revealing, but the people themselves are more so.

I should confess that where I record my own conversations in Spanish I take advantage of the author's privilege to edit and smooth phrases that more often than not were expressed in clumsy and fumbling words. I trust that the Spanish terms where occasionally used, as much for appropriateness as for convenience, will be self-explanatory.

Since identification lends weight, it is too bad that I must so often disguise my informants by deliberate vagueness: "an American busi-

nessman in Madrid," "an engineer from Valencia." But in Spain today it is not easy to find anyone who is willing to lend his name to a statement, and even the members of our own Embassy and other official groups tend to be as timorous in this respect as any Spaniard.

Ironically, in attempting to give a dispassionate but well-rounded report, I will—of this I am quite certain—alienate if not actually anger those very factions in Spain which some Americans will accuse me of favoring.

And so with the publication of this book I will undoubtedly lose many of the good friends I made; for all Spaniards are quick to resent the slightest suspicion of criticism, on even the most noncontroversial of subjects, if voiced by an outsider, even though they may agree with it. For any remarks on these pages interpreted as critical, I ask these readers' generosity, and plead that if I were not so completely enthralled with the subject of Spain and the Spaniards, I would not have been so bent upon trying to figure both of them out.

All that I have attempted to do here is to present the enormous impact upon me of this strange land and its unique people.

This is what I found.

L. H. C.

SEVEN MILE FORD, VIRGINIA

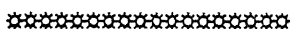
KINGS WITHOUT CASTLES

PART

I

THE OUTSIDERS





ON THE AFTERNOON of a brilliant October day I sailed for Spain, a Never-Never-Land that seemed more fiction than fact. . . . What is its special quality that has held this country apart from the world swirling around it?

My friends thought it very imaginative of me when I proposed to cross on a Spanish ship; none of them knew that a Spanish line existed. The *Gaudalupe*, a 7,800-ton passenger-cargo vessel, had called at Caribbean and Gulf ports before putting in at New York. She was headed first for the northern coast of Spain: La Coruña (where I would disembark), Gijón, Santander, and Bilbao—names which meant nothing to me then but which I knew in the months ahead would each assume personal dimension.

I hoped that the eight-day crossing among Spaniards and Latin Americans would form an instructive introduction to my objective.

At first the other passengers viewed me rather warily, but when on the second evening I ventured a general "*buenas noches*" as I rose to leave the lounge for bed—the rest kept Spanish hours, remaining up until two and three in the morning—there came a chorus of replies. After that I even detected a protective attitude toward me, out of consideration for my halting Spanish. I was called *La Señora Americana*—"The American Lady."

The word quickly got around that I was a writer. The Spaniards seemed pleased that someone today was interested enough to travel to Spain in order to write about their country, and at the same time were resentful that it hadn't been done earlier.

The captain of the *Guadalupe* was a Basque, a big man with handsome, heavy features, his gray eyes rimmed by short, black lashes. On the second evening out I was sitting in the lounge when he came in, flanked by his purser and the chaplain. He nodded without smiling, then, as the three sat down at a table near me, gruffly asked if I would like to change to one of the suites. "We want you to receive a good impression of this ship." I said that I was very comfortable where I was. Then he barked: "How do you like the meals?"

"Delicious! But they serve so much—I don't have a Spanish appetite—"

The answer snapped back: "Americans have just as large appetites."

I had not anticipated that the sensitive Spaniards would be quite that touchy. To amend my *faux* I said, "Of course. But American women always have to watch their figures. With us, in a land of easy divorce, we must not only make ourselves attractive to catch a man—we must work twice as hard to hold him."

His eyes twinkled as he flicked a look at me, then glanced away. "So you are going to write about Spain. Yesterday the world was turning its shoulder to us. Today it seems we are suddenly the mode. It has taken the United States a long time to realize that we can be friends, united against a common enemy. Spain has been the target for much unjust criticism."

An officer leaning against the bar—the ship's doctor—spoke, the corners of his mouth turned down in utmost disdain. "Spain is not in the least interested in any opinion of it the rest of the world may have—but it absolutely infuriates us when people tell lies about us!"

I was beginning to feel hemmed in. I said, "It's true that since your civil war Spain has received a bad world press. I, personally, feel that your problems are your own. For all I care, the Spaniards can worship a golden idol and pay yearly tribute of a hundred

virgins to a caliph. I am not coming over to look for things to criticize, but to inform myself about all aspects of your country which interest me, and I hope will interest other Americans. For instance, Spain to us is a virtually unexplored storehouse of historical monuments and antiquities—”

This was a perfect cue for a statement I had been polishing up in Spanish for any encounter with the press: “The bonds [*vínculos*—I had had to look it up] established by your conquistadors going west are now being strengthened by our tourists coming east. Just as Spaniards discovered the New World in America, so now Americans are discovering the Old World in Spain.”

Even the ship’s doctor beamed. I felt rather pleased with myself.

It fascinated me to think of this relatively small country, Spain, having had so great an influence over so vast a territory in the Western Hemisphere and on around to the very Orient.

Beyond the more obvious heritages she had bequeathed to her colonies, I had already spotted as common to both Spanish and Hispano-American passengers many other lesser ones, even to such little mannerisms as whisking out a calling card upon the slightest excuse. Any understanding garnered in a study of the Spaniards promised also to be applicable to the vast continent of peoples of Spanish descent, qualified only by the dilution with other strains and the influence of the powerful Coca-Cola culture of the nation to its north. But even I could also detect decided differences in the dress and behavior of our passengers from the opposite sides of the Atlantic. In both, the Spaniards were more conservative.

“The differences are not always in our favor,” the cruise director commented with a smile on this subject. “When we arrive in New York, for instance, having picked up additional passengers in the Caribbean, I arrange tours of the city for our passengers’ convenience. The Spaniards never want to go on tours. Each insists on going off on his own, even though it means that it will cost him more and he will see less.”

I said, “You should know that you are giving me an additional point to support the popular belief that the highly individualistic

Spaniard rejects discipline and refuses to be organized!"

"It is true," the cruise director admitted, a little ruefully.

The chaplain of the *Guadalupe* was a fine-looking Spaniard with flashing eyes in a dark-skinned face etched with permanent laugh lines. He had a manner of hurling out his words explosively without looking at the person whom he was addressing. One evening he showed me a travel folder of his own town, Segovia.

"Of course you will visit Segovia. Segovia is a jewel—the pride of Castile! Its Roman aqueduct is monumental! True, Mérida has Roman ruins, but—" his face lighted as he spread his hands before him— "Se-GO-via! Ah-h! In Segovia you will find the best of Spanish architecture, the most history, the largest alcázar, the finest surrounding countryside. New York! What do you have? A mountain of steel and cement. No history, no art, no culture. But—" he threw back his handsome head—"Se-GO-via!"

I laughed as I said, "Spoken like a true Segoviano." He then switched on the same note to Spain. "Where else will you find such treasures of antiquity—"

A shipbuilder from Santander was intrigued by my plan to drive alone all over Spain. Always well turned out in gray and black, he had a habit of standing with hands in pocket on the outside of a group, as though he had only a few minutes to give before being due elsewhere. One afternoon he found me in the lounge going through some notes I had made on the ship.

"You will learn a great deal about us as you travel through the country," he said, almost enviously. "You will find many times over that in Spain every possible combination of extremes and contrasts exists. Franco, for instance, an ardent Catholic, has a personal bodyguard of Moors who pray to Mohammed from their own mosque within the grounds of the Pardo, where they guard him."

He said that I was wise to be making my trip now. "Enormous changes have taken place in Spain within the past ten years in the way of reconstruction and new building. Factories and plants are going up everywhere. With the economic aid we now have from the United States, the next five years will see even greater advances."

A metallurgist from Bilbao, a blue-jowled thickset man, put on a great show of *amistad* when we first met. "The United States and Spain—we are good friends! We like and admire Americans very much!"

I said, "How can you like us when you have had no opportunity to know us?"

Some of the joviality left his heavy-lidded eyes. "But we do know you, very well. Our press correspondents keep us informed of all that is happening in the United States. And from American moving pictures we study your way of life." The *amistad* was quickly draining out of his voice. "The truth is, your moving pictures are incredibly stupid, and the worst possible propaganda for the United States."

He was warming up to his subject: "We are studying you very carefully. We know all about the corruption scandals in your government, and the problem of racial discrimination, and the juvenile delinquency and increase in sale of dope. Also the strikes—" He looked almost smug. "I have a picture which I keep, clipped from a newspaper. It shows American policemen on horseback pushing back a crowd of women whose husbands and sons were fighting in Korea."

I was curious to know why he made a point of keeping this picture, but he did not give me a chance to ask. "The United States thinks that by the Agreement she has bought a military ally to fight her wars for her in Europe. Spain will fight only for Spain. Your dollars cannot buy us."

The metallurgist and the ship's doctor were the most aggressively nationalistic of the lot. The three of us found ourselves alone in the lounge early one afternoon. I asked what the Spanish attitude was toward the rest of Europe.

Before my question was out, the metallurgist was answering: "The rest of the world we don't like! The rest of Europe, we hate!"

He continued: "We like the Germans, perhaps because they are far away. If they were closer, we might not like them so much. The British we despise. During the war—your war—when the British were so anxious to keep the Germans from marching down

through Spain, Mr. Churchill told General Franco, 'Later we will discuss Gibraltar.' The war ended and years have passed and still the British refuse to discuss Gibraltar. But we can wait. Franco has said that some day Gibraltar will fall into our hands like a piece of ripe fruit.

"The French! Who, tell me, can have any regard for a nation which has no self-respect? As for the Italians, they are very pleasant people, always laughing and singing. But who takes an Italian seriously? At Guadalajara a whole division turned and fled. In the War—our war—we found them most unreliable—"

It was interesting how inevitably the conversation got around to the Spanish Civil War.

The nomenclature in that war has been very confusing to outsiders. Most misleading of all is the term "Loyalist," elsewhere associated with extreme-Right traditionalism but in Spain referring to the Republican government (socialistic and veering to the Left) in office at the time the Nationalists (conservatives, including most of the army under Franco) decided it could no longer be endured. On the *Guadalupe* I was first introduced to the greatly simplified term, *Rojos* ("Reds") for the Republicans, and, much less commonly used, *Azules* ("Blues") or *Blancos* ("Whites") for the Nationalists. It amused me that later, in Spain, former Republicans would be quick to pounce upon the foreigner if he used the word *Rojo*—highly objectionable for its Communist connotation; but on occasion I heard the objectors themselves slip up and use it.

The cruise director explained the Monarchist point of view. "For stability and continuity," he said, "Spain needs a ruling line that is preordained. Spaniards defer to a head-of-state that is selected by a power beyond their control. We respect dignity and sovereignty. We are not yet ready to place neighbors who, we feel, are no better than ourselves, in the highest seat of government."

The rough weather relieved him of many of his duties, permitting him to relax among the hardier passengers. One afternoon I showed him a *New York Herald Tribune* review of Claude G. Bower's *My Mission to Spain*. He flushed as he read it.

"But this is ridiculous! It says here, 'In July, 1936, the army re-

sponded by raising the flag of revolt: the Spanish war began.'” He shook his head. “It was not a *revolt*! The Republican government, in going increasingly socialistic, had become unacceptable to truly patriotic Spaniards. The Spanish Army took up arms in defense of the way of life that was being taken from us by extremists, experimentalists, and irresponsibles. The flag that Franco’s forces flew was the red and gold one that has been Spain’s proud flag for centuries.”

He added bitterly: “This report carefully ignores the fact that it was the flagrantly brutal murder of Calvo Sotelo, a Nationalist deputy in the Cortes, that ignited the war. That atrocious crime was committed by the police, under orders from the Republican government. A government that must resort to assassination to maintain itself is not a government but a mob in office. Its rule of violence could only be countered by violence.”

Early one listless afternoon I found myself reading from my address book to five or six seated around me the names of some of the people in Madrid to whom I had been given letters of introduction. I read only the names of those sufficiently highly placed to have some meaning for my audience.

A man to whom I had scarcely spoken—he and his little colorless, brown-faced wife were like a pair of dried-up winter leaves drifted into a corner and ignored—tossed in a comment from the edge of the circle: “Your friends have at least made certain that you will receive the official point of view.”

I said, “I’m very grateful for these letters. But—” I looked straight at him—“I have made a point of letting these friends know that I must report what I find as I find it, with as little personal bias as possible. And—” I was glad for the chance to let the *Franquistas* know this—“I also made a point of getting letters to people competent to give me the opposite side from the official picture.” I smiled. “Those are some of the names I have *not* read out.”

Later, as the gathering broke up, my skeptical kibitzer came over and sat down beside me. “Now that I know you do not intend to reflect propaganda blindly, or let yourself be swayed by a sense of obligation to your friends, perhaps I can help you, too. When you get to Barcelona you must talk to—”



He took out his cards and on the back of several wrote a name and address. We talked for a while. He said, with infinite sadness, "You will hear every possible version of the history of our civil war, but out of it has come only one certain truth: a million Spaniards died, and we are no better off than we were before."

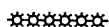
To myself I wondered . . . but as yet I did not know enough about the subject to question such a statement.

From the bridge, open to everyone on the last day out, the mountainous coast of Spain's northwest shoulder loomed formidably—a jagged, blue-green wall; against it moved the white fleck of a pleasure yacht cruising southward.

My plans were to spend a week in Galicia—La Coruña, Santiago de Compostela, Vigo—then take a train for Madrid, where I would remain until I could pick up my car at the French border, after which all of Spain would be mine to explore.

If the trip taught me nothing else, I learned that every Spaniard is ready to volunteer an opinion on any subject; that no two are likely to agree (unless to present a solid front to an outsider); that a Spaniard, with unabashed equanimity, can completely reverse himself on any previous stand; and that behind the initial friendliness there is likely to lurk the skepticism, the sardonic humor, and longing for recognition of a people whose national pride has been deeply hurt.

I knew from the shipboard introduction to my subject that I would not lack for material, but instead would be ducking my head under a barrage of impressions, information, counterinformation, valid contradictions, and emotional arguments. The problem would be to maintain my own balance and objectivity as I tried to sort and compose this tangled mass into some sort of pattern that would permit others a better understanding of a most compelling word: Spain.



Geographically, all I knew about the country before I arrived was that the Pyrenees cut it off from the continent and that Madrid was in the almost dead center. And that it was rugged. "No matter how

much you hear that Spain is mountainous," friends who had just motor-toured the peninsula told me, "you will be appalled by some of the roads you will find yourself following."

Of all those in Madrid whose advice I asked, only one shook his head at the idea of a woman touring Spain in a car by herself. He thought I should get a permit to buy a pistol. "Some of these regions you plan to drive through are very wild. There may still be bandits in the mountains."

Others scoffed at the idea. Spain's long tradition of banditry can be applied only to the past, they assured me. True, right after the end of the Civil War a number of Republicans took to the mountains, from whose fastnesses they made raids on the villages and took pot shots at the Civil Guard—a life of out-and-out banditry glorified by some foreigners as a courageous last stand against fascist forces. Gradually they were run down.

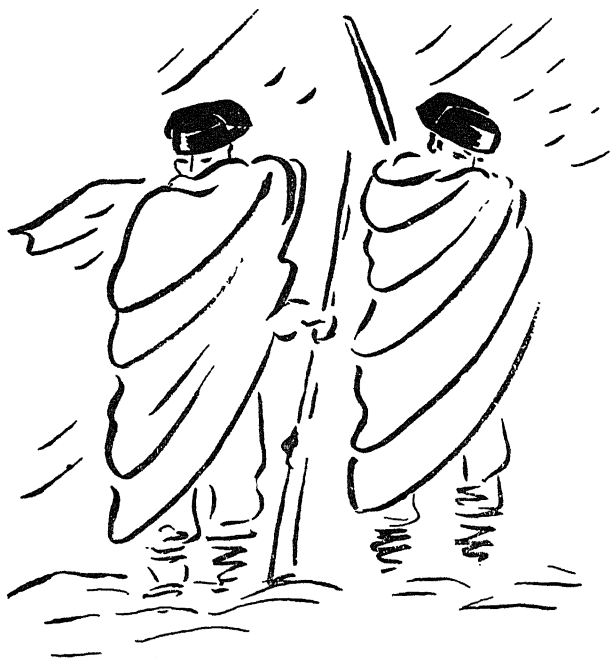
I did not buy the pistol.

I did buy two extra tires (and learned, wisely as it turned out, to use the jack); a length of towrope; a can holding an extra five gallons of gas; and took along a thermos, a flashlight, a knife, and a candle.

I remembered the horrendous tales about the Spanish roads and resolved to stick to the main highways, a resolution which I promptly broke. The highways spoking out of Madrid are good enough. Completed during the dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera, they are now being repaired and widened wherever necessary; all over Spain workmen along the sides of first and secondary highways are pecking at piles of rock with their long-handled, toylike sledge hammers.

The warning that Spain was mountainous was fully borne out. No verbal description can prepare one for the rugged convolutions that crop up within an hour or so of any given spot—giant, jagged lumps of granite that make our mountains at home look like sofa cushions.

In my ten thousand miles touring this country I was never once afraid of what people might do to me, but on several occasions was very much afraid of what nature might pull, primarily in the way of bad weather on mountain passes. On my second day of driving I found myself heading straight for the formidable snow-covered barrier of the Sierra de Guadarrama. To my further dismay I saw that



the fold where the road bored into it was filled with a snow storm. I remembered the hairpin turns the day before climbing to the Puerto de Echegarate a couple of hours south of San Sebastián. The road was wet from melting snows, and I had thought how dangerous the pass would be if the temperature had suddenly lowered to freezing point—as was now obviously happening ahead of me. The flesh-prick of fear, I learned, is a singularly unpleasant sensation.

The car was soon enveloped in flying specks of snow, happily still melting as they hit the asphalt. I started to climb; and then, just where a glaze of ice was beginning to form, I noticed dirt had been thinly scattered. With that my fears vanished. *Obras Públicas*—Public Works—was on the job. Civil Guards wrapped to their noses in gray-green capes against the swirling snow, in their shiny black bicorne looking like Napoleon's troops on the march from Moscow, stared at me dumfounded as I blithely crossed the top of the pass and down the other side into a battering rainstorm.

Soon after you cross the border you realize that in this country the motorist is relatively on his own. Distances between stops (and available gasoline) are much greater than in France or Italy. There is rarely a choice of inns and restaurants along the way where one can pause at whim for lunch, and it is wise to know ahead where you will be spending the night. The gap between a *turismo parador* (inn) or a first-class hotel, and whatever else may be locally available, is usually dismaying. It is not that the secondary hotels in Spain are always impossible—I have been in parts of the world where they would be considered luxurious—it is just that our American standards of comfort in the past few decades or so have zoomed.

Several times before the season got under way I had the eerie experience of being entirely alone in a place except for the staff. This happened the first time I stopped at the Monasterio de Piedra, a thirteenth-century Cistercian monastery run for the past fifty years as a hotel-restaurant. At night the reception desk was a lonely little island of light in the cathedral-high entrance hall. Enormous stairways mounted in the shadows on either side to the vaulted, dimly lighted cloisters, vast and deserted; the click of my heels on the seemingly endless walk along them from my room to dinner broke a stillness which one felt must have existed since the last echo of Cistercian chants died away. In my room that night—until I opened the veranda doors to the steady roar of waterfalls and tireless trilling of the spring's first nightingale—the stillness was complete. Suddenly through the cavernous halls was hurled, in the harsh Aragonese voice of some servant girl, a *jota*, that fragment of song that begins nowhere and ends nowhere. Then again: silence.

Later, when it became necessary to make reservations all along the line in order to insure a room, I looked back with nostalgia to the days when I could walk in anywhere and take my choice.

Those who have long known this country deplore the passing with each year of the vestiges of Old Spain. In another five years, they say, the country will be "ruined." I suppose that I, too, on my next trip will be speaking with nostalgia of the Spain I knew, changed as a result of of the increasing hordes of visitors and the Spaniards' race (within

localized areas) to modernize; nevertheless, I was delighted to be doing my traveling now, with the benefit of good main roads, good food, and clean beds, rather than fifty or even fifteen years ago, minus these pleasant factors.

One of the many peculiar features that sets the country apart is that those who have had an opportunity to know it feel possessive about it . . . if not possessed by it. Italy and France and the rest of Europe belong to everyone; Spain, so far, to relatively few.

It is said about Spain that the visitor from the very start either is completely enchanted by it—or hates everything about it. Nothing in Spain is quite the way it is elsewhere; the comforts and customs which travelers have learned to expect in other countries do not necessarily apply to this off-beat land, and the sooner the outsider realizes this, the fewer the frustrations. Here, where nine at night is still “afternoon” and the theater starts at eleven, life seems slightly awry.

The meal hours impose the greatest readjustment. Before long I became very Spanish in my habits, rarely dining before eleven at night, but for the first few weeks I was always either starving to death at the wrong time, or sitting down to lunch or dinner long after I was beyond feeling hunger. Once the adjustment has been made, the rearrangement of hours gives a peculiar illusion of added time . . . but the picture remains well out of focus. “You can oversleep until ten,” a bemused friend of mine commented, “but, knowing that lunch at two is still four hours off, you have no sense of guilt for having lost half the morning.”

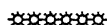
It is an oddly dreamy existence; there never seems a reason in the world for rushing; you are going through familiar motions, but to a new and singularly soothing rhythm.

The most commonplace features in the daily routine are often just enough off-center to give one a “what is wrong with this picture” feeling. My sister-in-law (one of my first visitors) coming out of one of Madrid’s smartest shops was enchanted to find a half-dozen sheep being driven past the entrance; fastened between the horns of the ram was a cluster of paper flowers!

There is an absent-minded quality to life in this country that lifts one from the ordinary world. From my window at the Palace Hotel

long after midnight one night I watched, delightedly, three young men strolling across the square in a drenching downpour; they wore trench coats, so popular that Madrid in cooler weather gives the impression of being host to a permanent convention of foreign correspondents. It being equally the fashion not to wear a hat, they were bareheaded. Totally unconcerned about the rain that was battering them, they stopped to chat in the middle of the glistening square before strolling on.

Spain, remote and peculiar to itself, is a dream world where again and again I found myself blinking at the behavior of these most unpredictable but delightful of people.



It always interests me to ask those happy in their discovery of Spain just what it is that they like about the country. France has fancier castles and lovelier vistas; Italy has vestiges of fully as much history crammed into half as much space; England is loaded with a cozy charm totally lacking in Spain; almost any other European country is more photogenic. And yet there is something about this barren, hoary land that reaches out and catches the visitor.

Invariably the answer comes without hesitation: "It's the people!"

Somehow, in even the most fleeting contact with waiters, shopgirls, and taxi drivers, the charming personality of the Spaniard mows down all barriers of language and customs, and wins us.

Outsiders who must live and work with them suffer many moments of exasperation, but the entire time I was in Spain I was in a state of delight—at some incident in the process of happening, or at the memory of one amusing to recall. In any encounter, no matter how brief—whether it is asking directions of a policeman or buying a bottle of wine in a grocery store or getting one's shoes shined at a sidewalk café—a personal relationship is instantly established, often lively, sometimes daring, always courteous.

The Spaniard is ready to respond to the slightest indication of a sympathetic personality. On our part, a sufficient knowledge of the language to be able to communicate, plus the ability to break through

our imprisoning Anglo-Saxon barrier of constraint, can produce a very spritely exchange of words, on subjects of world magnitude—or about nothing at all. The fact that this spark can be struck with almost any Spaniard makes the people of other lands, I fear, seem lamentably dull in comparison. One has only to cross the nearest border to realize how life away from the Iberians falls a little flat.

The Spaniards are pleasant, gracious, personally interested in you, good-humored, obliging, patient, eager to be helpful, and remarkably honest.

Waiters never rush you in a restaurant: "take your time" is the keynote here, even though customers are lined up waiting for a table. One evening in Madrid two other Americans and myself, supperless after a drawn-out cocktail party, looked around for a place in which to stop for a sandwich. The nearest café was Gijón's, a hangout for intellectuals. That night it was jammed, but by luck we got a table. Something special was clearly going on, for the crowds increased until not another chair could be wedged in and people were standing right up to the curtained door, but we were too interested in our own conversation to inquire. Finally we paid and left. The next day I read that at the café that evening the Gijón Award for the best novel was being chosen; although it must have been obvious to waiters and tableless customers that the three of us were totally uninterested in the proceedings, we were never by glance or gesture hurried as we lingered over our sandwiches.

The Spaniards are receptive to tourist money, but—with the exception of the gypsies of Granada—not yet grasping. You undertip a waiter, or (the 15 per cent service charge in mind) don't tip at all—the man is as gracious as though he had received a generous *propina*. Once at a service station there was fifty centavos (about a cent and a quarter) due me in change. I gestured to the attendant to keep it. He said with no trace of sarcasm, "Thank you very much." Embarrassed, I exclaimed, "Don't thank me for *that*!"—and at once realized my tactlessness in pointing up the rich American's scorn for pennies among a people so poor that the smallest coin is respected.

In Spain strangers speak to strangers; by contrast, the Spaniards make us seem suspicious and constrained. Americans are by nature

informal, but with anyone we don't know we are on guard; if a stranger speaks to us we are likely to give him a blank stare before we answer cautiously, if at all. Spaniards, on the other hand, are the exact opposite: by nature formal, but among strangers completely at ease, quick to speak or laugh. I liked the pleasant way they have of nodding as you enter and leave a dining room or informal hotel lounge, a courtesy which is received by certain nationalities with dull, deadpan lack of response.

In Spain the ritual of politeness is particularly important. They still use archaic expressions of politeness which I found utterly charming. *Su servidor* (your servant), *a mandar* (yours to command), *a sus piés* (at your feet), are automatic responses from shopkeepers when thanked for services rendered, but they certainly make a woman feel royally attended.

The most ragged Spaniard displays a courtly grace of manner that is never in the slightest degree ridiculous. "Are you from Mérida?" I asked the well-informed guide in the Roman amphitheater of that city—it interested me that a man whose worn sandals and wretched "uniform" indicated such a crushing poverty could be so completely at home in the erudite world of Roman civilization; too, his fine features and walnut complexion indicated Moorish blood from farther south.

"From Mérida—" he bowed—"in order to serve you."

If there is a special angel who takes care of children and drunks, there are also courteous Spanish policemen who look out for helpless foreigners, many unable to speak a word of the language. Throughout my entire time in Spain I was conscious of being surrounded by people anxious to be helpful. In the rathskaller-like seafood restaurant of the hotel in Santiago de Compostela I was making an awful mess of trying to withdraw some prawns from their shells. A Spanish family at the next table watched curiously. Finally the father rose and came over. He picked up one of my prawns. With forefinger and thumb, none too clean, he pulled off the head, then cracked the shell down its back, and easily peeled it off. The slice of lemon in the finger bowl, he explained, would take away the smell of shellfish. I was very grateful!

You not only have the feeling that these people are really interested in you, but that they are amazingly lacking in normal self-interest. It was a common experience to have attendants in a store, where I may have bought nothing, go to considerable trouble to direct me to other, presumably competitive shops. In Seville one June morning I paused at a flower stall to buy something bright for my hair. But the pink carnations clashed with my red pocketbook, nor would the daisies do. The swarthy Andalusian woman clucked sympathetically. "There is another flower stall on the street around the corner," she said, indicating the way. "Perhaps they will have something."

The sincere concern of Spanish friends in your welfare is heart-warming. An American boarding with a Spanish family in Madrid said that the household was just as concerned as he about a big business deal that was hanging in the balance; Pepita, his landlady, was burning candles for him before San Nicolás, patron saint of commerce.

"The whole family is praying for me," he said. "The other day Pepita's nurse came to see her. Eighty-four years old, she had come by herself via train and subway from her village up in the foothills of the Guadarrama. She heard all about me from Pepita and asked to meet me. She was a spry little woman dressed all in black. I said I'd drive over some day to her village and see her. She said no, it was too poor, her house had a dirt floor, there was no water, no light, and she would not be able to offer me meat with my meal. I tried to give her a hundred pesetas but she wouldn't take it. She said she, too, would light a candle for me to San Nicolás when she returned home. How can you keep from being drawn to people like these?"

Fiery and volatile as they are, the Spaniards nevertheless preserve their good nature under situations that would tax the amiability of many more stolid races. The lovely Arab bridge at Toledo has formidably narrow Moorish gates at either end. I had slowed down in my car, blowing my horn, when a motorscooter catapulted through the exit. Seeing me, the man jammed on his brakes; another, immediately behind, piled up on top of him. No one was hurt, nor were the vehicles damaged. As I passed them and proceeded onto the bridge, both men were laughing as they untangled themselves.

Considering the grinding poverty throughout much of this land, it

is surprising to find a people so phenomenally honest. It is true that the presence of the police, never far off and swift to act, plus the severe penalties, may exert a curbing influence on larcenous impulses; but it seemed to me and to many I talked to that the Spaniards go out of their way to exhibit a natural honesty. One day in Madrid my sister-in-law gave her taxi driver a large bill and told him to wait. When she came out of a shop twenty minutes later, she could not see him and at once assumed that he had taken off. But he was waving and calling to her from a parking space up the street. In all the times that I left my car in a garage overnight, loaded with luggage and loose items and unlocked, I never missed a thing.

"Basically the human material is good," one long-term student of the Spanish scene said in trying to explain this honesty.

There is in their attitude what I can only call a *moral elegance*. The aunt of a Spanish friend gave a beggar woman a valuable gold coin, and did not realize her mistake until later. She returned to the site and by other women of the locale was given the beggar's address. It turned out to be an apartment house in a surprisingly good section of town. The woman came to the door, clean and well-dressed. The point of this story is not that there are beggars in Spain as elsewhere who make a good living from their profession, but that the woman said at once: "I have been expecting you. You have come for your gold coin. Here it is. I realized that it was a mistake."

I know an American State Department official who on retirement chose to make Spain his home, primarily for one reason: the Spaniards are so original!

"A Spaniard never tells you the same thing twice. They're full of surprises. You never know what's coming next. It's impossible for life to be dull in this country."

Killing an hour in Madrid's Retiro Park one morning, he began to listen in on the conversation of a couple of middle-aged Spaniards on the next bench, both neatly dressed, evidently chance acquaintances. One, a baker, was recounting some of the problems related to his business. The other listened attentively. Finally the first turned to him. "And you, what do you do?"

"Me? Nothing! I am a duke." ("*Soy duque.*")

One could compile a booklet of stories about Spanish taxi drivers alone. Madrid's four thousand individually owned taxis represent every make of automobile since 1920, with emphasis on those of the shoebox silhouette. I was once in one that was, literally, tied together inside with string. But the fares are absurdly low, the Spaniards gracious about whatever extra is left them—and where else in the world today will a taxi driver hand you back money when he feels he has been overtipped?

One Spanish acquaintance told me of an experience she had when starting out with friends for the theater. They gave the taxi driver the address. The man thought a moment. "No. I don't think I want to take you there."

"Why not?"

"Because I have been picking up people coming out of that theater, and from what they say the play cannot be much."

"Then what play would you suggest?"

"Well, from all I hear the show at the Teatro de la Comedia is good—"

It is difficult to be bored in Spain. You never know what the Spaniard is going to do or say next; and you have the feeling that he doesn't, either. Whatever else he may be short on, the Spaniard never lacks for quick and ready words. It delighted me that whatever remark I might throw out would bring a lively answer.

In the white, sun-bleached Andalusian town of Antequera one afternoon I stepped into a low-class store to buy a piece of canvas to protect the back seat of my car from my luggage. It was a modest little shop, filled with harness, rope pack containers, and other homely items. A foreign woman alone in this town and in such a shop was of course a curiosity and at once a crowd gathered. Among the men and women ostensibly intent on their own business was a newsboy, the most *urchin* little character I have ever seen—very dirty, with a thatch of rusty hair, dark skin spattered with freckles, and an upturned nose that looked as though it were about to do a backflip. He stopped by my elbow, carefully avoiding looking at me. Of course I had to speak to him.



"Hello! How go things in your world? Well, I hope?"

"Well—badly." ("*Bien—malamente.*") There was no impertinence in his manner; he was a little breathless, looking everywhere but at me.

"How much is your paper?"

"One hundred dollars."

"So! You think all Americans are millionaires! Don't you know that we have to work before we can travel?"

"Here, one works before one can eat."

I had to give him that round. The next morning as I left town, and again several months later when I found myself passing through Antequera, I scanned the streets for this boy. I would have found some excuse to test his wit once more.

The quick and persuasive answer is rarely lacking. Going through the Royal Palace at Aranjuez, summer refuge of the former mon-

archy, I remarked to the guide as we paused in the elegant chambers of the Spanish queens: "I imagine that I could be fairly happy here, as a queen."

"But you *are* a queen! And I am your lackey!"

A pretty American girl found herself one day in one of Madrid's few meterless taxis. At the end of the ride the driver pulled a figure out of his head which she knew was ridiculous. She objected.

"But Señorita! Consider! You have so much! You have youth, and you have beauty, and you must have a million admirers. Surely you also have the money for this fare!" Of course she paid.

It was the bright-eyed bellhop in Granada who decided this girl—then in Spain as a tourist and already tempted to give up her job at home—to try her fortunes in this country. She had been at the hotel several days and wanted to leave the boy something.

"Ah, no, Señorita! I could never accept a tip from a pretty woman!"

The Spaniards have no monopoly on Latin gallantry, but they may be a little quicker and less self-conscious than others on the spontaneous word that makes a woman feel admired and desired. Driving myself to the bullfight one Sunday afternoon in Madrid, I slowed down beside a weary policeman directing the thick stream of cars. "Please—am I on the right road to the Plaza?"

"Sí—" and then he added: "*Guapísima!*"

It meant nothing—he had scarcely had a chance to note more than that it was a woman at the wheel—but it made me feel delicious for fully fifteen minutes.

Guapa (pretty) is a word Spaniards throw around fairly freely. One wet night in Madrid I was caught between engagements in a downpour on the Gran Vía, unable to get a taxi. Finally one slowed in its approach—but a man leapt ahead of me and grasped the door.

I pleaded with him. "Señor! Please! Let me have this taxi! My best clothes are being ruined! Look at me!"

"*Muy guapa! Muy guapa!*" ("Very pretty!") The eyes of the shameless old fellow—he turned out to be one of those who earn a living from tips gained by opening the doors of cars—were brimming with chivalrous appreciation.

Piropos, those comments murmured by gallants along the street,

range from this standard compliment paid any pretty girl in a green dress, "If she looks like this when green, how beautiful she must be when ripe!"—to ones that are very complicated. "*Olé*, the poor woman who has nothing to smell with!" means, by inverted way of "What a charming nose!": "What a pretty face!" Spanish beauties run this gantlet of admiration with their charming noses straight ahead, knowing that to show any awareness would be highly inadvisable. In Spain every attractive woman, unless engaged in such suspect professions as fashion modeling, night-club acts, or even radio work, is considered out of reach until she indicates otherwise; in addition to being admired, she is given the benefit of the doubt and is respected. But word, via the movies and the behavior of tourists out upon the town, is spreading of the free and easy ways of foreign women; with the first gesture that could be mistaken for a go-ahead signal, the attack is launched.

In these matters Spaniards consider subtlety superfluous. A man in a hotel lounge will fix an attractive stranger with his eyes until she begins to feel like a butterfly pinned to a board. Conversation, once formal introductions are made, can skip all sorts of preliminary gambits to this standard type of line: "You are utterly enchanting. Most of all I like your eyes; then the curve of your cheeks. The line of your lips is designed to drive men crazy. Your figure is absolutely captivating—" And so on.

Under this kind of onslaught, the passionate words given triple intensity by eloquent eyes, many an American woman has found her perch on a pedestal dangerously dizzying.

Such problems, as well as *piropos*, are usually reserved for the youngest and prettiest of tourists and Embassy secretaries, but gallantry is so automatic with Spaniards that their charming responses can sprout in answer to a sympathetic personality, whatever the type or age. One could be fat and fifty and still make a million friends among these people.

There are other qualities about the lively Spaniards which win even the most fleeting transient, if he has eyes and ears and heart to note: their *alegría* (gaiety) which flares from a temperament that is basically morose, and their extraordinary stoicism in the struggle to survive.

Many Americans are stunned, as I was, by how hard a vast number of Spaniards have to work.

The Spaniards must rate as one of the most delightful people in the world, from anyone's point of view. What puts the Spaniard in an interesting class by himself is that every good feature is matched by its contradiction.

They *are* friendly, courteous, and considerate. But try to take your turn at a window in a bus or train station, or at a post office or bank. The very same Spaniards who under other circumstances are pleasant, courteous, and considerate have turned into elbowing, pushing barbarians.

Take their honesty: unquestionably the Spaniards are among the most honest people in the world—and among the most corrupt. One can never be certain that the concierge in a hotel will mail the letters left with him (two airmail stamps to the U.S. equal half the basic daily wage of a laborer) or dispatch the telegram for which you are charged. Spaniards themselves will advise you not to send checks or money through the mail.

As a woman I can report that the Spaniards are the most gallant people I, personally, have ever known. But the same lack of inhibition that permits the man on the street to utter a compliment as a pretty woman passes also permits him to make an equally spontaneous remark that can be very cruel. I was told of an American girl with an eye-catching figure but a homely face whose every appearance in public must have been an agony of humiliation—for she spoke Spanish and could understand the vicious comments made at her expense. The Spaniards, also, are quick to ridicule anything with which they are not familiar. Another American girl told me that she started out one rainy morning from her hotel wearing plastic galoshes, and was so jeered and laughed at that she turned back in tears.

The only explanation that I have for these dual qualities in the Spaniard is that so long as there is a *personal* relationship, he is considerate, gallant, and honest. Where a personal relationship is lacking, he feels no compunction about anything he does. He is, in short, two quite separate people. The same official who thinks nothing of lifting

a check from the mail would, among friends, display an honesty above and beyond the call of conscience.

There seems, too, to be a certain code: some acts are "permissible," such as siphoning gas out of a car or lifting stamps from a letter, or for a cook to cheat on the market accounts; while others are not. All I can say is that whatever the visitor is looking for to criticize in the Spaniard—or to praise—he will probably find it.



A Spaniard in Madrid told me before my first trip south to Andalusia: "There is one thing in Seville which you must see, before the tourists find out about it and ruin it—the Barrio de Santa Cruz."

The Barrio de Santa Cruz is the old Jewish quarter of that city, a tight tangle of narrow alleys and little hidden plazas with flower-burgeoning balconies breaking the whitewashed walls and iron lamps above corners where a Sevillano with guitar might at any moment step: a movie stage-set marked "Spanish Town" that has somehow become peopled with quite ordinary looking characters.

Poor man, I didn't have the heart to tell him the next time I saw him that this quaint section of Seville is so popular with visitors that the carriage horses automatically head for it whenever a tourist is taken on.

Andalusia provides the popular romantic concept of Spain most often pictured in the tourist folders, and Seville in April is the country's biggest publicized attraction. A city for eleven months of the year locked in sex-segregated constraint—half-Catholic, half-Mohammedan—for this brief period it bursts alive in a paroxysm of activity, first for Holy Week and then the *feria*.

I think that Seville's *feria* must be the world's gayest and most romantic event. No American girl could be blamed for being taken with the olive-skinned *caballeros* who in dashing *cordobés* hats, short jackets, and tooled Andalusian chaps ride dainty Arab mounts, right hands resting lightly on their hips in a gesture ineffably *seigneur*, their flashing eyes roving complacently over the heads of such drab onlookers as myself . . .



... or for envying the Sevillanas mounted gracefully behind them, each with a bared arm around the slender waist of her young horseman, the enormous flounced skirt draped over the entire rear half of the horse.

Unutterably charming; and perhaps the last living evidence of medieval chivalry to persist, wholly without affectation, into the twentieth century.

For seven days the music doesn't stop. In the open-faced *casetas* lining the gaudy fairways the dancers dip and whirl in the graceful *sevillana* that goes on endlessly, in spontaneous combustion breaking out even in the streets. At 4:00 A.M. in my bed far from the fairgrounds I could still hear, down the courtyard shaft, the restless sound of castanets. Next to the daily prelunch parade of prancing horses and mule-drawn carriages I was enchanted by the children who matched their

elders in dancing as though bewitched. The full, flounced skirts—pink trimmed with white, white with red, red with pink—are like so many giant carnations that have been tumbled upon the town.

At its end the sleepless, exhausted, happy, hung-over Sevillanos must topple like dancers from a tarantella. Again the city sinks into its lethargy, to slumber and dream for another eleven months with only the tourists to stir the languid movement of life along its rather untidy streets.

Most tourists in Spain during the season take in a bullfight, if for no other reason than to disapprove. I used to prefer less expensive seats in the *Sol y Sombra* sections to escape having to hear the stupid remarks of visitors seeing their first *corrida*: "But the poor bull doesn't have a chance!"

"I've never seen anything so disgusting!"

And always: "It's so *unsporting*!"

Instead, a displaced foreigner among the Spaniards, I could annoy them with *my* stupid remarks, such as: "But why are you applauding when the *torero* is doing badly?" The reaction of the true *aficionado* is often too devious in its sarcasm and irony for outsiders to follow.

Sitting in the *conservador's* office at Seville's Alcázar I fished around lamely, hoping that Señor Murube would make it possible for me to visit his uncle's *ganadería* where the famous Murube bulls are raised: "I am interested in writing about the bullfight as an expression of the Spanish temperament—"

"It's been done. There's nothing new to write about the bullfight. All that is worth noting is that it is no longer what it once was. It used to be that a *torero* dedicated his entire life to his profession, making of it a religion. Now they go to the cafés, wear perfume, and sleep with Frenchwomen."

At an inn on the Levante coast a small, middle-aged man usually sat by himself, leafing through a well-worn scrapbook. One night I spoke to him. He was a retired bullfight impresario and in his scrapbook were packaged many of the memories in which he now lived. According to him, times indeed have changed, and not for the better.

"The bullfight has become very commercial. Formerly, raising

fighting bulls used to be a luxury of the nobility—*ganaderos* were the Conde de This or Marqués de Whatever. Today you will notice that the *ganadero* is usually Señor. Now bullfighting is not nearly so dangerous. The bulls are grazed. From grass they derive much less strength than when they were fed on grain. The *toreros* prefer it this way. It used to take eight or ten thrusts by the *picador* to tire the bull's neck muscles. Now three will do it. Today, pushing his horns into the quilted skirt of the horse, the bull loses his force and becomes frustrated. In the old days he had the satisfaction of digging into the horse."

What is it about the elegant slaughter of bulls as an art that impels young Spaniards to turn to a profession shrouded in tragedy? For one thing, it is the village youth's sole chance to glamor, wealth, and fame. Bullfighters are the highest paid people in the world. The five or six top ones receive \$20,000 for an afternoon's performance, which in Spain has a \$100,000 value. Thousands know them by name and face. They drive the biggest, fattest Cadillacs, buy bull-raising *fincas*, have their pick of the prettiest *chicas*, and are fawned over by American film stars. It is worth struggling for.

One morning in the Rastro, Madrid's flea market, I was drawn into a hole-in-the-wall by the glitter of metallic embroidery. The place sold second-hand bullfight costumes. A boy stood before the counter, feet together, back straight, the *torero's* stance. He wore the cheapest shoes; his suit, too short at wrists and ankles, was shapeless. He stood motionless, dumb with longing, before a soiled blue costume embroidered in silver. I smothered a crazy impulse to buy it for him.

Every year all over Spain thousands of boys run away from home, hoping to be *toreros*. In every village there are two or three aspirants. In February perhaps two hundred find their way to Salamanca, the center of a bull-raising area. In ragged clothes, often barefooted, living in the street, shivering in below zero weather, eating on an occasional hand-out from bullfighters and *aficionados*, they hang around the cafés, hoping to pick up word on which estate a *tienta*—the trials at which brood cows and young bulls are weeded out—will be held. Somehow, by riding the rails and on foot, they get themselves to the *ganadería*. *Toreros* who don't like the look of a dangerous cow have

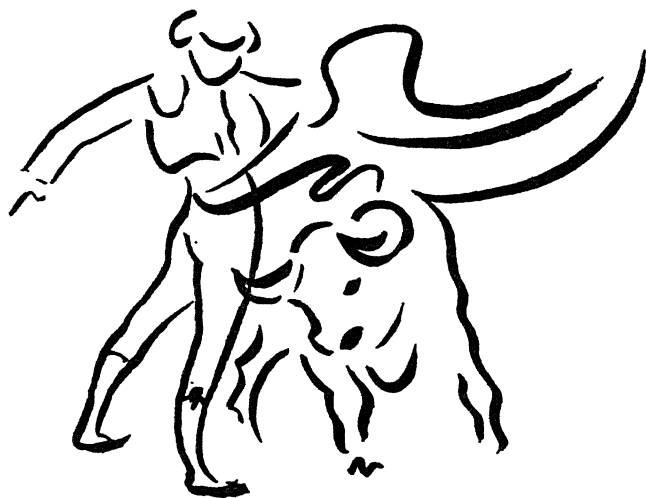
been known graciously to turn her over to one of these boys who, nervous and half-starved, steps into the ring using his coat for a cape.

In Seville during a fight excitement flared as suddenly an *espontáneo* leaped over the *barrera* onto the sand and faced the bull with his *muleta*. From all the way across the ring I could see his knees wobbling as he made wild passes at the brute. Poor boy, he didn't have a chance—on his third try the bull's horn hooked him, lifted him into the air, then before the creature could be diverted, got in another thrust as the figure lay on the ground. The would-be bullfighter, his eyes wide with pain and fright, was hurriedly carried from the ring.

It is a peculiar feature of this profession that there's no intermediary step between the game of make-believe, with companions in a back lot aiming at the "*torero*" with a pair of horns, and facing the very dangerous real thing. "How on earth does one *learn* to be a bullfighter?" I asked an elegant Andalusian from Granada who was sponsoring a fledgling *novillero*.

"It is very simple. First, the boy has to be brave. Second, he has to be a born bullfighter. With that he can learn anything."

Foreigners tend to judge the bullfight by their first experience, and if this includes the spectacle of a horse being gored despite its quilted



protection—something which so far I have mercifully been spared—they are irrevocably down on it. A good afternoon is a matter of luck; even the best *toreros* have bad days. Perhaps the bulls the *matador* has drawn were not “brave,” leaving him with little to challenge; or fear has cut the sharpness from his passes; or—most important—that peculiar chemistry of the crowd’s temper, the bull’s response, and his own mood, which can project a *torero* into a performance of utmost artistry and courage, had never been formed.

When the *torero* is poor and the bull is poor, the bullfight is a boring and sordid business; and one must sit through a number of these to see a good one—but the good afternoon justifies all the bad ones. Even so, those who go prepared to be shocked and disgusted will find plenty to give them this satisfaction.

Oddly, anywhere but in countries with a Spanish heritage bullfighting would be an anachronism, and unpalatable even to hardy enthusiasts such as myself. The gentle, peace-loving Portuguese in their fights do not kill the bull, thus cutting from the performance that element of death which *is* the bullfight. In southern France the bulls are killed, but . . . the afternoon somehow falls a little flat. It is a curious thing: the bulls are Spanish, the *toreros* are Spanish, but a certain quality is lacking.

It is the presence of a Spanish audience.

Spaniards live and feel—vociferously—every moment of the fight. The critical, violent response of a Spanish (or Hispano-American) audience can fire a *torero* to exceed himself, or it can destroy him. Bullfight audiences are the most unsporting in the world, the most cruelly fickle, and the most frenzied.

Havelock Ellis wrote that the bullfight, established in Spain in the eleventh or twelfth century, can be traced to Moorish influence, colored earlier by Imperial Rome. It is unquestionably the nearest thing to the battles between gladiators and wild beasts, the most deeply stirring spectacle to be witnessed as entertainment today, and an altogether amazing performance—when you stop to think about it—still to be found in full swing, with all its pagan splendor, in the twentieth century.

But the markings in the sand become clearer every year. The bull-

fight may already be vestigial, more so in Spain where it is suddenly the fashion to Westernize, than in Hispano-America where the cultures of the New World and Old are long since reconciled.

Futbol (actually soccer) has a competitive element that is a novelty with Spaniards, it is played all-year-round, and everyone can afford it. (The average Spanish town can now only finance one big bullfight a year.) A new generation is growing up with little interest in the bullfight. Ask a youngster, "Do you want to be a *torero*?" and the chances are he will answer, "No, I want to be *futbolista*." The 125,000-seat stadium in Madrid is full every Sunday; the 150,000 one in Barcelona is the largest in the world.

Still, it may be yet a while before the bullfight ceases to be a semi-sacred element in Spanish life. In Manzanarès late one winter afternoon I was talking to a garage attendant about the German circus that had recently been stranded there. "I suppose that while they were still giving performances," I said, "they naturally used the bullring."

He looked at me in amazement. "Certainly not. The bullring is for bullfights."

"How many do you have a year?"

"One."

Flamenco, equally hard-worked by poster artists depicting the color of Spain, also requires a Spanish audience; like wine, it is a product best appreciated in the region of its origin. Programs of Spanish dance in New York used to seem flat and repetitious; in Spain I loved them. The presence of highly charged onlookers is necessary to spark with fire and meaning the arrogant posturings, the stomplings, and tortured expressions, enormously sensual in their suggestion of restrained, deep-lying passion.

"You will have to look at bad flamenco all over Spain—in two months you will be sick to death of it," a fish-broker in Vigo said contemptuously as in a *sala de fiesta y folklore* we watched a girl in heavily flounced, sinuous red dress hurl the challenge of a song over her shoulder. "Just the same, the girl is very good. . . ."

There is a lot about flamenco that by ordinary standards could not be considered dancing; when Rosario, leading ballerina, lifts her

flounced skirt to show well-muscled legs as for six to eight minutes she drums a tattoo on the same spot—the movement no more visible than that of a hummingbird's wings—there is neither grace nor rhythm, only acrobatics . . . but the near-unendurable tension created by this protracted drumming brings down the Spanish house.

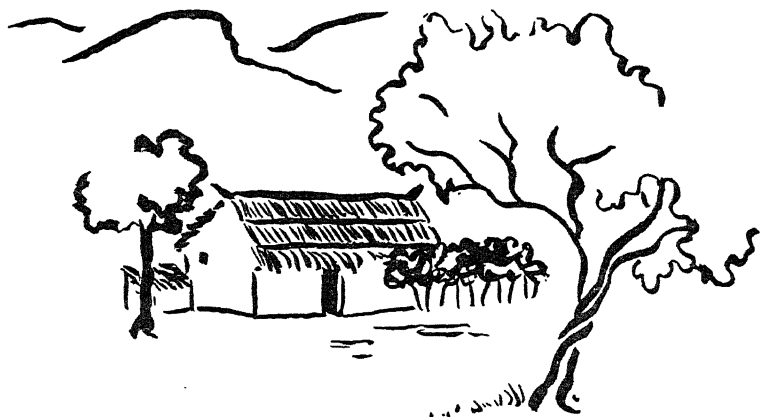


Flamenco has its origin in a mixture of Africa, Asia, Romany, and very old Spain. Africa and the East are particularly apparent in the fluid wrist and arm movements. Gypsy dancing to my unprofessional eye differs from flamenco in its ferocity; where flamenco in every gesture is controlled to a point of agony (few foreigners do Spanish dancing well, I was told—they put too much movement into it), in gypsy there is spontaneity to the point of wildest abandon. Both flamenco and gypsy extract involuntary cries from a Spanish audience. Both are totally different from the frenzied jitterbugging out of Africa, which is animal exuberance expending itself like a Roman candle. In most Spanish dancing the passion burns inward.

But Spain is not all the chatter of castanets and swirl of pretty skirts. Two features characterize this land to tourists: romance—and misery. Both are there, hand in hand. Often it is the latter which leaves the stronger impression.

Many come deliberately looking for it. Others deliberately close their eyes to it. Some find it picturesque; poverty is often photogenic, pictures of it “tell a story.”

It is primarily in Andalusia that so many tourists are impressed by the contrast between extreme wealth and extreme poverty, possibly because so many travel to Andalusia by the main highway which between Córdoba and Seville passes within sight of a number of huge *cortijos*—haciendas, looming large and white in the surrounding mat of olive groves—of wealthy landowners, while grass-roofed hovels line the road. In the south there are huts made wholly of grass; one expects these in Darkest Africa or on tropical islands, but somehow not in Western Europe.



Many visitors tend to feel righteous indignation over the low standard of living in Spain without attempting to understand its history and current causes. Coming straight from the most highly industrialized country in the world we are aghast, too, at the “primitive-ness” of this nation, where men peck away at the ground with hand

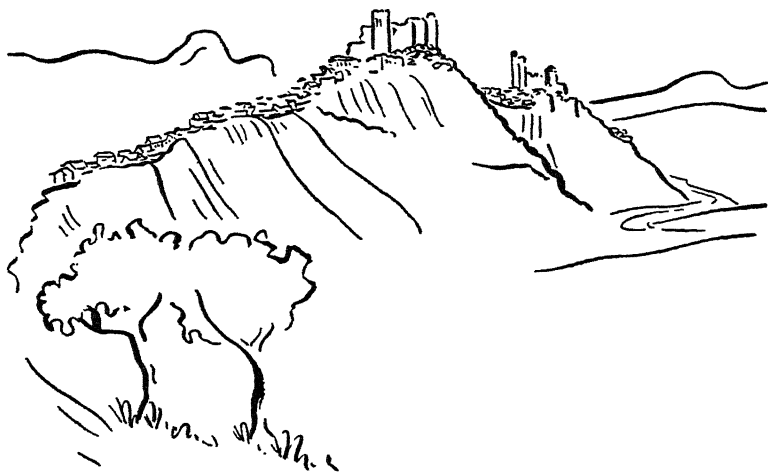
tools to lay a major pipeline, sand is gathered in baskets hauled on a burro's back straight from the beach to make concrete, and plows are often the crudest wooden instruments.

Those who accept the surface picture of Spain—whether it is of sparkling romance, or fascist dictatorship, or human wretchedness—without delving into the deep, diffused dimensions of each are no less foolish than the foreigner who analyzes the American scene from superficial impressions gathered in Washington, Harlem, and Hollywood.

Spain of the travel folders is fully true to life, if one happens to hit the right places at the right times. But when I think of this country I do not see the *ferias*, flamenco dancers, and *toreros* of the colorful posters. For me there are three features which could serve as trademarks of Spain: A towering church. The deserted bullring. A woman shawled in black.

And a fourth: a pair of Civil Guards on foot or slowly pedaling their bicycles, gray-green figures in Napoleonic bicorne crawling across





the slumbering landscape, patrolling dusty roads—the roads of Spain that seem to lead not merely to the next town, but back through time and out into space, drawing one ever further along them.

The travel posters tell only part. There is another Spain, which each must discover for himself; and it may be that some will never know it. Nor is it only the past which reaches out to slow one's steps. There is a more persuasive call, that of the Orient, most felt in the south where it adds its own elusive quality to the mysticism that pervades all the land. Again and again I was transfixed by the atmosphere of the East when I thought I was in Europe.

High above the winding road between Cádiz and Tarifa there is an Arab town, Vejer de la Frontera. Crammed onto the top of a treeless hill, it simmers in the sun like a dazzling mirage. The day I was there a whistling wind whirled dust along its twisting streets. Today, nearly seven centuries after the Moors were pushed from this outpost, veiled women still come out in the quiet of dusk to attend to household errands around the square. I sometimes wonder if the wind always sweeps across Vejer de la Frontera.

Almuñécar is a fishing village on a promontory near Motril. Above the strip of plaza beside the beach the town is piled upon itself up the precipitous slope of a rock from whose crest juts crumbling fortifica-

tions. In the quickly gathering dusk the pull of the tight-packed buildings was sinister . . . but irresistible.

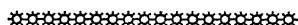
The moment I stepped from the plaza I found myself enclosed in a casbah of labyrinthine paths lighted only by the glow from open doorways. People brushed past me but no one spoke, nor, it seemed, even noticed me; yet I knew my presence was felt, exquisitely, heralded without words as I climbed the cobblestoned paths. I entered a stationery store, ostensibly to buy a notebook but in reality to try to establish some communication with these withdrawn inhabitants. A young man served me unsmilingly; a burnoose, I thought, would have been more suitable than his neat jacket and tie. For this was not Europe, or even Spain, but Moslem Africa, and I an unwanted interloper in a closed and private world.

Often the East creeps up unexpectedly and one is held as though drugged. On a still, hot afternoon in June I lay on my bed in a darkened room in Jerez. Just outside the half-closed shutters a couple of workmen were laying brick, and there was an occasional tapping, as though of a hammer. Intermittently they talked, only a word or two at a time, and then one of them would again take up his song, a fragile, flutelike thread of phrases in feminine, almost falsetto voice, painfully sweet, wistful without being sad, the faltering notes never falling into an expected sequence but following a pattern totally unfamiliar—in fact, there was no pattern. It was the *canto hondo*, the song of the south which one might imagine unfurling from the mouth of a muezzin at the hour of prayer. I lay in the darkened room and let the wavering thread of it curl around my heart.

PART

II

LAND AND PEOPLE



THERE IS A DRIVE out from Madrid that a friend of mine likes to take in the late afternoon, and sometimes I would go along with him. Just past Alcalá on the Guadalajara road we would turn off to the right and climb up onto a rolling plateau.

From far across the plains, almost from Madrid, even from the foothills of the mighty Guadarrama, one can see a tiny stub projecting from the long tableland of hills. This as one approaches emerges dimensionally, although still of the same taupe shade as the land, into a church: compactly vertical, windowless, buttressed: symbol of stubborn resistance to men warring around its base, while confining within the gloom of its well-like body the driven need of an elemental people for an inflexible God.

Behind it, hidden from view until one is upon them, a jumble of stone houses are clustered like lichen on the slope that catches the sun. There is not a tree or a shrub to break the barrenness, not a single gentle gesture of nature to shelter the young *novios* who every evening stroll up and down the trail, in good weather or bad, before the eyes of the village.

The road wanders along the top of the plateau among rolling fields whose unfriendly soil has been turned in hopeful effort to draw forth its life. (For a few fleeting weeks of the year, if the wind has not blown

the seeded topsoil away, these clay-colored fields will be green.) Before winding back down the bluffs, shockingly grooved by erosion, we would stop and get out of the car; and there, without a sign of life around us, we would listen to the peculiar singing sound of stillness, broken only by the gentle tinkle of distant sheep bells.

The Guadarrama, snow-blanketed in winter, stands as majestic guardian to the north. Madrid is a flat, scintillating patch in the distance, while behind us, tucked away among the fields of the rolling plateau, lonely villages crouch far apart, lost against the land in the encroachment of dusk.

Below us is the semiwalled town of Alcalá de Henares, once Al Kalat, an important Arab fortress guarding the valley of the Nahar, and always a military headquarters. Looking down upon it, yesterday and today and tomorrow become one, for history has marched through the little town in an endless procession: in Roman sandals, in the hide foot coverings of the bearded Visigoth, in soft Moorish leather, in clanking steel, in the felt slippers of black-garbed university students, in the shabby shoes of the casually uniformed soldiers of the Spanish Loyalist forces; and continues to march, as today the crowds of Spanish cavalry, tank and air force troops are swelled by Sunday waves of Americans from the big new airbase at nearby Torrejón.

Here, as we watched the spread of sunset over the tableland of Castile, boundaries fell away from time and space. In that clear light, with a sense of horizon beyond horizon, you feel that you can talk to God, that you are not material, that in another moment you could fly.

That is Castile.

That, in a sense, is most of Spain: barren, vast, drained of color, drenched with mysticism, valleys and ridges and towns blending before massive mountains into simmering, Dali-like plains leaving one awed by a sense of limitless distance and the insignificance of mortals in the face of Eternal Forces.

Each human being seems to stand alone. Although every wretched patch and strip of arable soil shows desperate attempts to cultivate, and towns and villages are rarely far away, the individual is thrown back upon himself in a land that appears uninhabited. From a train or car, more often than not, no single sign of life is visible around the



entire perimeter; a man and donkey silhouetted along the crest of a rise, or a flock of sheep flecking a windswept hillside, only accentuate the loneliness, greatest of all at twilight when along the dusty paths workers stream toward their villages, fatigue-silent figures on foot, in carts, or hunched over their bicycles.

I realize now why in books about Spain there is such emphasis on "soul"; the word is encountered again and again.

One senses in this country the presence of powerful fundamental forces, including an extraordinary well-spring of energy. Without the rawness of our own West, which so much of Spain resembles, the fine shadings that centuries of civilization should have left are lacking. Spain is painted in primary colors; you have the feeling that all the cardinal elements are here, still waiting to be diluted and mixed.

To me this country does not have charm. Charm is too soft and persuasive a word, a word for gentle French farmlands or stage-set Italian villages or the delightful English countryside; but not for Spain. Spain is like a large, lofty room, drafty and bleak, handsomely proportioned, interestingly if uncomfortably and sparsely furnished. Those who like small, cozy rooms will be happier, on this peninsula, in Portugal.

Portugal, well-tended and green, speaks to one in words that are pretty and precise. The voice of Spain is a harsh cry, at once exultant and agonized.

There are three countries, it used to be said, to which if one has ever known them one reverts: France, Mexico, and China. Spain is now replacing China. "Spain bites deep," was the only explanation one friend of mine could give for returning.

The quality, so strongly pervasive, that sets apart this corner of Europe is, it seemed to me, the close integration between man and nature, between past and present, thus forming a world, eerily withdrawn, whose inhabitants one would expect to be lesser gods descended from the rocky slopes of Olympus, rather than mortals doomed to pitting their strength and will against the relentlessness of this overwhelmingly harsh terrain.

Shortly before I left for home a reporter asked me what part of Spain I liked best. "The hard land," I answered. [*"La tierra dura."*] "Castile and León and Aragon, and northern Extremadura, and the country between Albacete and the sea."

Her eyes widened—she had probably expected me to say romantic Andalusia, or the lushly green northern coast, or pretty and prosperous Catalonia. I explained: "It is the bitter struggle between man and nature that, for me, makes the most arid sections of Spain the most interesting."

Not even the deserts of western Texas nor the Bad Lands of the Dakotas nor the lifeless mountain wastes of Mexico can match the desolation of certain sections of this peninsula, all the more impressive for the Spaniards' dogged efforts to wrest a living from its grudging surface.

I think that most of the stones and boulders of Europe must have been pushed down into this corner—that Spain was used as a dumping ground for rocks and shale and mammoth mounds of granite cleared away to make the pretty gardens of other countries. Approaching Madrid by train from the north, I was stunned by the rocky incrustations that turned the landscape from Avila on into a grotesque world fit only for lizards and goblins. Driving down toward the city from the Somosierra Pass are areas of solid, jagged rock that lack only flames shooting up from crevasses for this to fill any bill as Inferno.

Whole oatmeal-textured towns are but a concentration of stones

drawn together as though by a magnet from a similar-textured land; mountains are so solidly of rock that not a speck of green breaks their elephant-hide surface. There is a stretch through central Murcia where the earth literally is nothing but shale metallically reflecting the sun—and yet scratched, one can see, for what will be a crop of threadbare wheat. I drove through here twice—and wish now that I had stopped to scoop up a jarful of this hopeless soil, to show in my own country how desperate are the attempts of these people to live. Here one feels that God has renounced man.

Or, in the place of rocks there will be red earth—endless vistas of rolling red hills and eroded mountains, veined with dried-up river beds, pocked with dust-dry rain basins. All Aragon is like this, and a long, monotonous stretch south from Burgos, and much of León, and—the soil without color—inland from the lush Levante coast.

“Come back in the spring!” Spaniards all along the route of my first circuit said. “It’s beautiful here in the spring!”

It is beautiful everywhere in the spring. Even the burnt hills of Aragon, even the treeless plains of New Castile . . . but never, I fear, the forever gray wastes of central Murcia.

It interested me as in July I drove out of Spain along the Mediterranean coast to see the sensual French and semipagan Italians—peasants and laborers—half-bared to the sun, luxuriating in it. In Spain the men in the fields cover themselves, as did their Arab predecessors in the desert: the sun is an enemy.

Spain is a battleground, between man and nature.

Again and again one seems to be hurling an angry challenge at the other. How often I have seen a formidable mountain range matched in defiance by a formidably buttressed height with a town trailing behind it. Sometimes nature’s mocking laugh rings out: on the road from Soria to Calatayud a fortified knoll is reflected in almost identical formation of rock on the ridge behind it.

But the relationship is close. In certain sections villages, castles, and cathedrals seem to have been conjured up out of the ground. A town appears but as an eruption of the soil, a bubbling up of stones or earth, as much an integral part of its source as a burl on a tree. Castles more

often than not are a continuation without organic interruption of the bluffs on which they have been built, and it is difficult to see where nature left off and man began. Whole towns made of mud or entirely of stone, without benefit of plaster or paint, are so blended with their background that one's eye can skim the landscape and miss a good-sized village a thousand yards away; often only the sharp angles of roofs breaking a ridge, or a church tower projecting from a nearby fold, indicate the presence of man. Except for the dazzling white towns of Andalusia so often capping a sun-bathed hill like the foam of a spent wave, buildings reflect the shade of the region's soil, from ash-gray (Toledo) to pink-beige (Totana) to red (Lerma). One wonders how important cities such as Salamanca (rust-brown) could have been built with nothing to work with but mud and stone, and a dream.

It is a peculiar feature of Spain that much of the countryside is devoid of habitation: through centuries of warring and banditry peasants returned at dusk from fields as far as three miles away to the protection of the towns. Driving south from San Sebastián on the Madrid highway the rolling Basque country is dotted with these somber, brooding villages; one can pick out as many as six or eight at a time, each huddled in the shadow of the church which rises high above the roofs—a blunt, stolid fortress of strength, as closed and inflexible as the clenched fist its very structure suggests: the dominating feature towering over every Spanish community.



I don't know where Shakespeare picked up the line "castles in Spain"—probably from some courtier who had traveled that way during Bloody Mary's marriage to Philip II. If Spain today is studded with medieval fortresses and watch towers, what must it have been like centuries ago, before the elements—and the natural destructiv-



ity of the ignorant who would tear down the remnants of a Roman aqueduct to make a sheep pen—had put in such devastating work!

Each spring downpour dislodges more stones, liquidates more mud bricks, spreads wider the cracks in once sturdy towers. The height above Sagunto, a town on the coast just north of Valencia whose origin is lost in prehistory, is crowned—the hackneyed expression could not be more aptly used—by extensive walls enclosing Roman ruins, the outlines softened by time as though melting in the sun. What an historical treasure this would be in any country not already glutted, as is Spain, with castles!

It is sad to think that each year sees the further leveling of these historic relics of a violent past. In a guidebook I had read that Daroca, a town on the Zaragoza-Teruel-Sagunto road, “possesses medieval walls, well over a mile in length, and 100 Moorish-style towers.” Finding myself pausing at a place not too distant from Daroca, I drove over one afternoon. It may have been a walled town three hundred years ago, but today all that remain are the gates by which the highway passes through it, and the scalloped vestige of adobe walls—worn by the elements down to their jagged stub—draping the bare hills on either side.

Someone has said that Spain itself is a castle. Certainly the country has been on the defensive a long, long time—from enemies within as

much as from those without. One has only to look at the standard church to see that it was intended also as a fortress. The oldest building in Avila, a palace now owned by the Duke of Abrantes, is built into the city walls, but the face it turns toward the town is also sternly battlemented. There are parts of Spain where the jagged ruins of fortresses seem to crown every commanding height and encrust every narrow pass.

In the Gun Room at the Escorial there is, down one side, a huge mural showing the Christians and Moors engaged in battle. One should look at this before traveling over Spain, for it gives meaning and life to the crumbling vestiges everywhere of that turbulent era.

I liked to try to imagine the cavalcades of Moors in turbaned helmets and bright garments riding down the winding path from some fortified height, the sunlight gleaming on breastplates and lances, while from the turreted walls flew the colors of the Caliphate.

No words, nor even pictures, can ever convey the delicacy and grace, despite its fortress frame, of the airy palace of the Alhambra, that architectural cobweb suspended above Granada; to fill its gardens and fragile chambers with the sensuous life of its occupants, I had to call on memory of Persian miniatures showing another Near Eastern people feasting, resting, and making love.

Spain has soaked up more history than it knows what to do with. In Avila the "Avila Garage" is a small fourteenth century church.

Take a town like Toledo—no, everyone takes Toledo; take Tarragona. On a "balcony" overlooking the Mediterranean, with the inland side also falling sharply away, it has been a natural site since time began for man to settle and entrench himself. I had not gone far on my first exploratory stroll, late on a golden March afternoon, when I began to feel the confused pull of the past, confused because so many epochs were jumbled together. From the center of the Roman amphitheater now being excavated projects the remnants of a Christian Visigothic church. In the old section of town one has, literally, only to scratch a bit of plaster from a building to find a wall a thousand years old. A town which has been more or less destroyed half a dozen times, Tarragona with its magnificent walls (in whose construction

prehistoric "Cycloptians," Iberians, Romans, Arabs, Spaniards, and British in turn have had a hand, and in whose partial destruction the French generously contributed) is a monument to the history that has washed over this peninsula in waves.

It always delighted me to find woven into the growth of more recent centuries or still partially encircling the towns the vestiges of Moorish and sometimes Roman walls. Circling Segovia by the dirt trail below it one can easily pick out the first and second, and even a third line of defense around this bluff that in turn was held by Iberians, Romans, Visigoths, Arabs, and Christians.

On the brightest days these towns seem shrouded in the diaphanous cloak of the past.

Motoring through Spain one becomes conscious of the many who have traveled these same routes before, for there is, as yet, less here than in other European countries to remind one of the passage of time. It fascinated me to look in on the fourteenth-century inn on Córdoba's Plaza del Potro, active that morning with country people unloading vegetables from their burros, and think that the tousled-headed woman leaning on the rickety balcony railing probably looked down on a scene that has varied little throughout six hundred years.

In this strangely ambivalent country yesterday lives today, and the present might be two centuries back. Even in the thriving centers of Barcelona and Bilbao, Madrid, and Valencia, one detects a vaguely distraught quality beneath the activity. Stop at any other provincial capital and you are struck by the dreaminess of a country still gripped hypnotically by the past.

Each town sends out its own message of life held in suspension. Avila, as compact as a cupcake within its mighty walls in the center of a plain, in winter is swept by bitter winds from the snow-blanketed Sierra de Gredos, and wolves come down from the foothills to howl hungrily around the nearby villages. One bleak December day I asked a man how the people amused themselves until warmer weather permitted them to spill out onto the plazas and streets.

"There is nothing. An occasional football game, the *cine*. For men the *café*. That is all." He shrugged. "Truth is, life is very boring."

Santiago de Compostela is a jumble of winding, paved, arcaded alleys lined with little seafood bars. Projecting from the town is a parklike *paseo* that encircles a wooded knoll. I returned here in the late afternoon to look back upon the town caught in the setting sun. For a few minutes the gray of the ancient buildings, clustered in a mound capped by the great cathedral, was turned to gold.

From a barracks somewhere below the sound of an army band drifted up. Behind me dusk darkened the grove of gnarled and lumpy oaks—a fit habitat, I thought, for sorcerers—and, as I watched, an old crone in colorless rags came tottering down the slope between the trees, bent beneath an enormous load of hay. She might have been her own twelfth-century forebear, and I, some imagined figure from the future.

Probably more than any other Spanish community Toledo's tight and airless streets express the somber core of the outwardly animated Spanish nature. It is a city one cannot visit too often—nor wish to remain in two days. While I was visiting near the town, I used to come in occasionally to wander around the maze of alleys off the main streets which zigzag from the square. At twilight one afternoon I stopped a moment to listen for the beat of Toledo's heart. The way was but a rivulet of cobblestones flowing down between austere walls to meet another rivulet and form a wider path.

Two women in black came slowly up toward me. I nodded to them. Both answered: "Go with God."

A little schoolgirl, fiery-headed, in black uniform with stiff white collar, hurried up, her legs working fast, her small cat-face tight with mean, little-girl thoughts. Two soldiers ambled downhill past me, turning to stare curiously; the odor of their unwashed woolen uniforms was overpowering. From somewhere, cushioned by thick walls, came the droning chant of priests. A door clanged shut, metallically, deep within a building crouched in the shadow of the stern arch behind me. By the Virgin above its closed entrance this could have been one of Toledo's many small, decaying convents harboring a handful of aging nuns, forgotten by all but the Bishop, clinging to their obscure order, with few donations and rising costs literally starving to death, one by one quietly dying off, or going mad.

The last color faded from the strip of sky above me; the street lamp over the corner below came alive. I felt, suddenly, that if I did not hurry I might have trouble shaking off the peculiar depression Toledo casts.

Often passing through provincial capitals such as Logroño, Soria, and León I have thought how insuperably deadening life must be for those who have known or dreamed of other places. All sense of urgency is drained from these towns. New factories and sanitariums and roads and whole suburbs are being built; but, as implacable as the seasonal return of storks to the enormous nests which all over Spain upset the architectural balance of belfries, there is another movement: the earth reclaiming its own. In countless communities plaster is falling from shuttered *palacios*; stone walls are rotting away; cracks widen in ancient buildings. A lulling lethargy pervades the land.

I am thinking of towns like Medinaceli, on top of a grassy, treeless plateau; its Roman arch, starkly grand (it didn't seem possible, but there it was) can be seen for miles. I climbed the plateau for breakfast at the tourist inn one morning, then turned the nose of my car down the cobblestoned alleys between tumbledown walls to the cobblestoned square, deserted but for a few old men already taking their places in the sun outside the bar, and a slab-figured woman paused in a doorway, her broom of twigs at rest, to watch me. The great Renaissance palace of the Dukes of Medinaceli, Spain's most powerful family, was crumbling with decay; life too had been withdrawn from other, more modest *palacios* on the square.

I am thinking of villages like Nuévalos, a jumble of mud houses plastered and crammed onto the top of a pilelike bluff jutting from a valley in central Aragon, the whole as rotting as the giant stub of wormwood it resembles. Dirt alleys burrow their way between bulging walls that almost touch; doorways are low and lopsided, little more than animal openings leading to dank and lightless warrens. Groups of women, the older ones veritable witches in black, on warmer days draw up their chairs in the patches of sunlight to gossip and sew. There is a little plaza, of course, with the inevitable *palacio*, its *escudo* embossed in mud on the adobe face, now the home of

the three priests; but only a square mud-brick tower, stuck out on a point, remains of the castle.

(The slightly built young man, one of the four schoolteachers of Nuévalos, hungry for contact with the outside world: "Tell me, Señorita, is Kansas near the sea? Are Americans brunettes? Do most of them speak Spanish?")

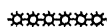
I am thinking of all the chalk-white towns of the south, baked by the sun, each dusty street a still-life featuring a drowsy dog, a burro, a woman in black, a man outside the bar—sometimes a deserted Mondrian abstraction of white on white. It often seemed singular on such streets to see anyone in modern dress, on motorscooters and bicycles.

Not all these towns lack activity: in most, men are working harder than ever before in offices and workshops and stores; children play noisily in the streets; new motorscooters buzz along the highways; more girls wearing homemade reflections of the latest styles are going out and getting jobs as clerks. But still a dreamy dissociation from the bustling world as we Westerners know it hangs over them.

The activity is that of a squad of soldiers briskly marking time on one spot.

It is that of a harmlessly sputtering laboratory compound—capable of violent explosion.

The characteristics of this land-in-limbo which sound so dour and uninviting are the very ones which most intrigue. For, as strong as the impact on the visitor of other-worldness, is that of the land's enormous strength, leashed in languor beneath its slumbering surface. . . . One wonders, in the memory of past explosions, if it were not better that this country continue to dream.



"You must be careful how you make sweeping generalizations about us," the Spaniard, a former ambassador to Washington, told me. "There is about as much similarity between a Galician and a Murcian as there is between a Swede and a Turk. And they are about as congenial."

"There's no such thing as a Spaniard!" many made haste to tell me.

Despite certain common characteristics, this seems true. The strongly patterned geography of the land has served as a mold to form a variety of highly individualized groups; abetted by the lees of history and races caught in its convolutions, this mold has cast a collection of people as distinctive from each other as are the sections from which they come.

Every visitor to Spain quickly wearies of having Spaniards constantly explain how different each section of the country is from the rest—Galicia from Andalusia, Catalonia from Castile, Asturias from Aragon, and so on.

Well, they *are* different.

Within an area considerably less than that of the state of Texas, there are parts of Spain which might be West Virginia (around Oviedo), New England (much of Asturias), California (the Costa del Sol), Brittany (the northern coast), Norway (the Galician coast), Maine (the Costa Brava), and tropical Africa (Elche).

And great stretches that could be New Mexico, Wyoming, or Arizona: the central plateau, extending from the wooded hills of Catalonia to verdant Portugal, from the Pyrenees and their jagged continuation across the north to the rolling plains of the south and its semitropical coast. It is this parched plateau that dominates the character of the peninsula . . . and of the population.

What could be more natural than that from this dry, rocky soil—that of three-fourths of Spain—should spring men and women with the toughness of weeds. There is a lot about the Spaniard that is not unlike a nettle.

These people are *hard*. Often I was impressed by the formidable faces of men working along the roadside; if they had not actually been brigands at one time or another, they could certainly be cast for the role.

And the women: the traditional concept of soft, clinging femininity virtually does not exist in Spain. I could easily understand how during the Civil War the women in combat zones were often as ferocious as the men. And on higher levels: one has only to see an Austrian, a Frenchwoman, or one of almost any other nationality beside a Spanish beauty to become conscious of the rock-hard core beneath the



handsome, sleekly groomed exterior of the latter.

And the voices: the Spanish voice is pitched on a metallic level; it pours from a sandpapered throat with the rattle of a dump-truck unloading gravel and the brittleness of machine-gun fire. Spanish, no matter how well spoken—by a Spaniard—is a series of blows. I can remember only three women whose voices did not seem pitched to rasp out a military command.

This is a strictly masculine country. Despite growing practices which are the inevitable result where sexes are so completely segregated, there is a cult of virility; sexual deviates in the army must bear the stigma of a white tassel in the place of the blue or more common red one that dangles from the front of the Spanish soldier's cap. *Hombre!* is an exclamation as popular with women as with men. Castilian, the accepted language of Spain dominating all regional dialects, is an aggressive, masculine tongue.

Even the religion is militant—a religion of fire and sword, with Santiago himself “on a white horse” leading troops in battle and the Virgin of Pilar invested with military rank and honors. This is the country which gave birth to the Jesuits, a society which was so aggressive that for a period it was dissolved by order of the Pope.

The hardihood of the Spaniard is awesome. Often unable to afford (or to obtain) electricity, heat, and even water, he has built up not merely an endurance to physical discomfort, but a contempt for what we would consider essential requirements. This, despite its milleniums of history, is a frontier land, and these are still a frontier people. The very nature of the unrelenting terrain has kept them primitive.

I wish that I had known Spain, as the fountainhead for the extraordinary courage and hardihood of the conquistadors, before I traveled in South and Central America and the Philippines. I had always marveled how men weighted by armor and heavy leather could probe so persistently up tropical rivers, across burning plains, and over desolate mountains. But when one has been to Spain, one realizes that these men, drawn mostly from barren Estremadura and Castile, were merely exchanging one set of physical hardships for another, not entirely dissimilar. Heat, cold, hunger, thirst, flies—these were nothing new. The weak had been weeded out long before the trek to the New World began.

But these are the men and women from the austere plateau that is the greater part of Spain. Basques, Asturians, and Galicians working their own land in the green mosaic of tiny farms along the verdant northern coastal strip, and Catalans from that prosperous corner of the country, are other breeds.

Perhaps the difference in temperament is a question of water.

Where there is water, the land is kind, the life is easier, the people more gently disposed. Where there is no water, the land is hard, the life is hard, and the people are hard.

The town of Trujillo, home of the notoriously cruel Pizarro, rises defiantly from the sun-scorched center of a rocky plain in northern Estremadura: where the earth is so callous, how could the people doomed to wrest a living from it be otherwise? Murcians from the soulless soil west and inland from the rich Levante coast have had a bad name ever since the sixteenth century when Charles V in a proclamation to safeguard citizens from robbery and assault stated that after dark the following must not be out: "Recognized criminals, other felons, and all Murcians"; Gironella in *The Cypresses Believe in God* writes of *los murcianos* in the outbreak of the Civil War as he would of a pack of unleashed dogs.

Madrid is in the center of an arid area of great poverty; the Madrid bullfight audience is noted for its thirst for blood. Nearby in the rocky Guadarrama region there are villages where the *toreros* fear the crowds more than the bull; in lieu of a proper bullring, wagons are placed around the plaza to form a *barrera*; when the *torero* dives under the carts to escape the bull, the crowds gleefully push him back. In fertile Galicia, on the other hand, and similar small-farm areas where families are in close relationship with their cattle, there is little heart for the bullfight; the Barcelona audience is, as one *aficionado* deprecatingly put it, "enthusiastic but indiscriminating," in other words soft.

But in most of Spain there is no water.

Nor is it surprising that the Spaniards should reflect the land's might and mysticism with a strong sense of drama.

For years a pure-white cock was kept in a cage beside the altar in a certain cathedral to remind the people of the cock that crowed thrice as Peter denied Christ. A wildly imaginative touch!

"The Spaniards think in terms of symbols, not of facts," one Spaniard explained when I mentioned this to him. "We react emotionally to what we can see, not to abstract concepts. That is why most Spaniards would prefer to have as ruler a king, who is a symbol of govern-

ment, rather than a democratically elected president who looks like just another bureaucrat in a business suit sitting behind a desk."

Franco's Moorish Guard is pure Cecil B. DeMille. Where else except in southern California would it occur to anyone to paint the hoofs of the coal-black horses gold, and those of the white horses silver?

The bullfight with its exquisite use of contrasts—blood and gore smearing silk and glittering gold, delicate ballet-gestures pitted against tons of hideous brute power—is a refinement of theater designed to wrest every ounce of emotion from the audience.

This is a country for exaggerations, not qualifications, for emotion rather than for reason.

"In Spain never try to be complicated," a Spaniard told me. "Here we deal in fundamentals."

Strength and drama—that is the character of the land, and of the people.

In Spain roots do not spread, they go straight down, and deep. And the land holds onto its own. The Spaniard generally, although at one time wandering for king and Cross over half the globe, is tied closely to the soil of his birth. Third-generation Basques in Idaho and Utah like to send their children back to Spain to be educated.

Morriña—a longing, in this sense for his land—impels the immigrant to return to Spain periodically, otherwise he languishes and almost dies from homesickness.

A Scandinavian with thirty-four years in Spain told me, "You can be sure of this: only fear of punishment for some criminal deed will keep a Spaniard from returning, if only for a visit, to his *tierra*."

By that he means his *patria chica*—his "little country," his own section of Spain. One evening in Jerez I sat with a group of young army officers in the hotel while one played the piano. They were Catalans, doing their military service in Andalusia. "I have four more months to go," one said wistfully, "before I can return to my country."

"*Mi patria*." The young man might have been serving an ocean away from his homeland!

"When I go to Andalusia to visit my cousins," a Barcelonan said, "I feel like a tourist. And they probably feel among foreigners when

they come to Barcelona."

The rivalry between the two main cities, Madrid and Barcelona, is long and bitter. "Don't spend all your time in Madrid," a Catalan told me before I sailed for Spain. "Barcelona is a wonderful city."

"But why waste two whole weeks in Barcelona?" a friend in Madrid asked. "Two days will be sufficient—"

Spain is less a country than a small continent, a Balkan bundle of rival regions.

You rarely hear a Spaniard say a good word about anyone from another section. Of the hard-working Galician, others say that he lets his women do the heavy jobs. Of the Castilian, that he is too proud to work. Of the Andalusian, that he is too lazy to work. Of the Catalan, that—well, that he is a Catalan.

The indolent, gay, talkative Andaluz takes the greatest beating; he is the exasperation (and I suspect envy) of all other Spaniards. A Catalan educated in England told me, "We are the industrious 'ants' which keep Spain going. The Andalusians are the silly, improvident 'grasshoppers' who sing and dance their time away."

"The Andaluz is delightful but decadent," a Valencian said. "The women in Andalusia do the work while the men drink. I know for a fact that in Málaga men of the poorest classes will send their daughters out onto the street, and half of what the girls earn goes to keep their fathers in wine."

"The Andaluz is lazy," everyone will tell you. And the examples to prove it are legion.

There was the customer who entered the dry-goods shop in Málaga looking for silk. "Go next door," the owner, comfortably seated behind the counter, said. "Their silk is on the first floor and easy to reach, whereas ours is on the second."

A Madrileño holding governmental office in Seville told me that in Cádiz he started to buy some shrimp from a street vendor, but hesitated when he was told the low price. "Oh yes, they are fresh," the boy assured him. "But I have made the fifteen pesetas I need for today and so am disposing of these as quickly as possible." These tales, not all apocryphal, go on forever.

Certainly not all Andalusians are lazy. When I arrived downstairs in the apartment building in Seville where I had rented a room for the *feria*, a servant girl picked up my four heavy bags, catching one under her arm, and despite my objections almost ran up the four steep flights of stairs. At seven o'clock one evening she was on her hands and knees scrubbing the kitchen floor—and singing at the top of her voice. During the week of the *feria* when all of Seville dances and drinks, I saw girls working in the little shops where for a few centavos stockings are mended, stealing hungry glances from their needles at the gay crowds passing before the door.

To the rest of Spain Andalusia is vested with the romance that in the States has been felt for the Old South; the slurred speech of the Andaluz is spoken as though around a hot potato. Andalusians enjoy the lack of interest in physical effort of most southern people where a beneficent climate makes life easier, and a burning sun cuts both energy and the desire for food. They are, in fact, perhaps a little sun-struck; the combination of blinding light and bone-dry land, plus their own unique heritage from Africa and Romya, could be responsible for a temperament as erratic as it is sparkling.

I suspect that the Andaluz, who enchants while he exasperates, is often criticized for characteristics that are merely exaggerations of ones generally Spanish—and envied for others which many Spaniards would like to apply to themselves. His opposite extreme is the Catalan, who actually likes to work; and then the Basque, Asturian, and Galician. Somewhere in between is the gentleman of Castile.

Castile, studded with castles, became the fortified outpost for the Kingdom of León in the struggle against the Moors. Spaniards from rocky Castile developed the superiority of attitude that front-line troops will always have toward those in rear areas. Today the castles are crumbling; the arrogance, in full measure, remains.

"The Castilian looks down upon us because we are energetic and not afraid to work," a Catalan told me. "But it is the industries of Catalonia and Bilbao that are largely keeping the country going. If ever the opportunity presents itself, Catalonia and probably the Basque provinces will be quick to seek autonomy."

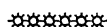
Each province, each community, each individual apparently oper-

ates as independently of the next one as it can manage to do. This, perhaps, is the distinctive feature of Spain: that each locality exists, develops, and even changes—always within itself.

It occurred to me that the strength (as well as the weakness) of Spain is in its unique cellular structure: like Tokyo's earthquake-proof Imperial Hotel, this compartmentalized country consists of a horizontal framework built on strong vertical supports, each free from the others; like a pier built on piles, it may sway and shudder under an impact, but quickly rights itself.

"Spain has a resilience peculiar to itself," a Spaniard told me. It is the resilience of a people who reflect the diversity as well as the elemental strength of the land. Perhaps Spain's assets, like those of an investment trust fund, cover a wide spread of risks, so that the weak features of one section complement the strong ones of another, and the whole is well laminated by its compressive stresses into a country capable of absorbing extraordinary shocks.

To which observation the Castilian might shrug, the Andaluz make a witty jest—and the Catalan would probably gnash his teeth.



It was dark when I crossed the street from the hotel to the lighted hut beneath the trees that was the Spanish State Tourist Office in the city of La Coruña. The young man inside, preparing to leave, looked up in surprise as I entered. Galicia, in the northwest corner of Spain, is well off the track for non-Spanish travelers, even in season; he could scarcely have expected an American, a woman, and alone, at that hour. While I inquired about buses and trains, I matched his inquisitive stares with equal curiosity.

The Galician is likely to be stocky and ruddy-faced, and often blond—the mountainous strip across the north escaped conquest by the Moors who swept over the rest of the peninsula. But with this young man the beaklike nose, the bright black eyes beneath arched black eyebrows, the dark skin, needed only a rag wrapped around his gleaming curls to turn him into one of his forebears who must have

sailed up the coast from Cádiz—long under Arab rule during the centuries when there was heavy intercourse between Spain's two most important ports facing the New World.

Peninsulas have a way of being periodically inundated. The successive waves of invaders which washed over Spain each carved its own pattern on the life, temperament, and looks of the people. It is in their appearance, first, that one finds the passage of the various civilizations most graphically recorded.

In Spain faces for me held a special fascination. I found myself peering at people on the street, at parties staring without hearing what was being said, and stopping to study pictures in photo-studio windows—constantly trying to unravel the racial strains that produce, with every liberty that could be taken with Mendel's Law, the so-called Spaniard.

In Cádiz the people have the sharp, dark-skinned, wild-eyed features of Arabs; they *are* Arabs. In Toledo one notes handsomer, heavier types; Toledo for centuries was a thriving Jewish community. At Santiago de Compostela in Galicia I was impressed by the university students—uniformly well-built, well-dressed, and handsome, the parade of them every midday around the park overlooking the town was enough to make an American co-ed swoon with delight. They are largely of Celtic stock, drawn from the healthy hills of northwest Spain.

All over, where least expected, crop up the blonds and fiery red-heads.

My own mental picture of the "Spanish type" was of an aristocratic *hidalgo*, an emaciated and languid Quixote as might have been painted by El Greco. I wasn't far off; the type exists.

A Catalan artist with whom I was discussing this took out his pencil and in a few minutes had sketched the type to be found everywhere (he said) but most common to the south: prominent cheekbones; full down-turned lips; heavy eyebrows; large, long-lashed eyes faintly touched with weariness; thick, wavy black hair. "Very Arab," he noted. I had seen the face he drew many times, even to the expression of slight exhaustion—*gastado*, the Catalan described it, "expended."

But equally common is another type: clean-shaven, thick-skinned, heavy-set, far from romantic. In Albacete one afternoon six of them sat at the sidewalk table behind us; they looked like so many lizards blinking their eyes in the sun.

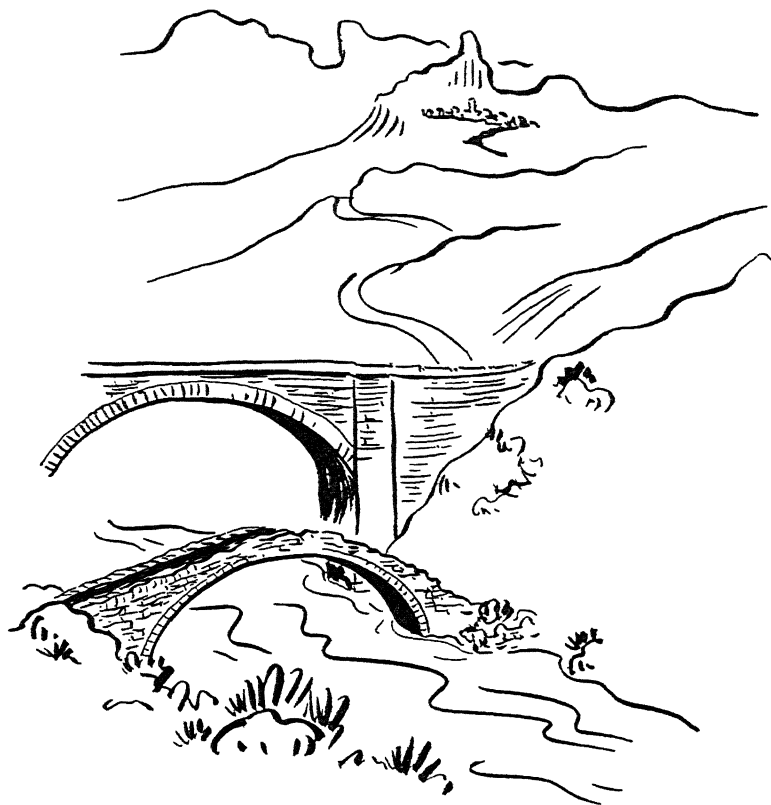
My first surprise in Spain was the realization to what an extraordinary extent the country reflects its eight centuries of Arab domination. (Scholars distinguish between Arabs and Berbers, Syrians and Copts, Almoravides and Almohades, but for the purpose of these notes I am following the habit, as popular with Spaniards as with foreigners, of lumping them all quite incorrectly together under "Arab" and "Moor.") The signature of the Easterners' long tenure is most strikingly seen in the eyes of the women—large, luminous black eyes designed to flash over the top of a Moslem veil.

My second surprise was that there could be any other type at all.

When the Celts along the northern strip are dark—and there are many who are—it is likely to be a bushy, aggressive blackness of hair and eyes. With these people holding their own in the north, meeting the black-haired Moors flooding Spain from the south, it is hardly surprising that the average Spaniard should be brunette. The exceptions which pop up everywhere attest to a long and interesting history of lesser racial infiltrations.

The Visigoths and Vandals burst into Spain in the fifth century, ousting the Romans, themselves to be ousted three hundred years later by the Arabs. The Castilian, tall and often tawny-haired, proudly claims descent from the Visigoths; it amused me that the many who boast of this distant ancestry never mention the Vandals (a word synonymous with barbarism) of whose presence the name (*V*) Andalusia, according to one school of thought, seems the only reminder. The chances are that the many blonds and redheads, particularly in the south, can be traced to relatively recent foreign invasions, rather than to the brief Gothic rule more than eleven hundred years ago.

The French have probably been most largely responsible for the blue eyes that one sees. Four hundred thousand French troops spreading over Spain during the Peninsular War undoubtedly left a mark; a decade later one hundred thousand were back as the French again



took a hand in Spanish politics. Throughout the centuries of heavy pilgrim traffic to Santiago de Compostela, French blood (as well as French influence in many fields) poured in. The Bourbon Dynasty, succeeding the Hapsburgs in 1713, opened the doors to a steady flow of immigrants. Driving through a town in Andalusia, I saw five little girls playing on the sidewalk; all five had the fluffy blond hair of my own nieces. Later I learned that this town, La Carolina, was one of several settled by French colonists.

British troops in the ten-year War of Succession and nearly a century later in the Peninsular War under Wellington managed, through deserters and the many wounded left behind, to leave more than the passing army's usual stamp upon the local scene.

Today any Spaniard from a family economically able to transport itself to one of the summer resorts is likely to be a mixture from all parts of Spain. (For the aristocracy the *feria* at Seville and August in the fashionable summer capital of San Sebastián serve as favored marriage markets.) A surprising number of titled Spanish families have received a fresh shot in the blood stream (and the bank account) from a judicious marriage with a Cuban, Bolivian, or Mexican heiress; this revenue from the New World has been delicately termed Spain's "invisible imports." In the past two centuries huge sugar fortunes were made in Cuba; many Spaniards returned to Spain bringing their colonial families with them.

But it is the East, not West, that has produced the exotic blood which gives such richness to Spanish complexions, temperament, and culture.

The Spanish writer Madariaga has commented that this peninsula has proven the natural home for three Oriental peoples: Arab, Jew, and gypsy.

Just as one should know Spain first in order better to understand Central and South America, so I went to Tangier, across the Strait, the better to understand Spain.

From one side of the seething market place I watched the bustling crowds. There was every Near Eastern and North African type, from blackest Nubians to red-haired Berbers. Here were the great-grandparents of so many Spaniards; for these are the people who, under Arab and Syrian leaders, until five centuries ago were overrunning most of the Iberian Peninsula.

The centuries have effected few changes in physiognomy. Except for one or two exceptionally dark horsemen, Franco's Moorish Guard might be made up of Andalusians and Valencians.

If the Spaniard today still bears in his features the strong stamp of this Asiatic-African blood, how much more evident this heritage must have been a few hundred years back before diluted by north-south intermingling and foreign infusions. The chances are that the features of the sixteenth-century Spaniard—certainly of those from Madrid south—were more Arab in cast than Caucasian; the average con-

quistador probably was often little lighter than the Indians he subjugated.

The extent of the influence of Spain upon the Western Hemisphere is awesome—Spain has left a permanent imprint on a greater section of earth than any other nation—but what surprised me is how much of what we have accepted as “Spanish” is actually Eastern in source. The lace mantilla that so prettily frames Spanish faces (and looks so inexplicably wrong on any Anglo-Saxon head) originated in the Moslem face veil. Spanish fans (today manufactured in Valencia) first were imported from China via Manila during Spain’s Golden Century, as were Spanish (“Manila”) shawls, now made in Seville; many of the designs still feature Chinese pagodas, figures, and flowers.

When I first arrived in Spain, I annoyed myself by constantly seeing similarities between these people and Asians. The dreamy negation of time; the adherence to tradition; the importance of “keeping face”; the lack of any standard as we know it of efficiency and system; the courtesy and personal dignity and the deep, rarely ruffled inner calm; the stress upon the gesture rather than the act, upon the packaging rather than the content; the fatalism and disregard for human life; the infatuation with the devious and flowery phrase . . . even to countless little superficialities, such as the love of gadgetry. As with the Chinese and Japanese, it is the intricate that intrigues. Spaniards specialize in ingenious door catches and percolators with tricky spouts; in the past they have been famous for excellent firearms.

One stumbles upon the East at every turn—in tools, in houses and customs, in language and art, and (most particularly) in music—but what is likely to strike the foreigner most forcibly is the Spaniard’s attitude toward women and the family. The Islamic custom of preserving the core of the home inviolate has been adopted by all of Spain; it is among the several characteristics that set the Spaniard completely apart from fellow Catholic Latins along the Mediterranean shore.

It is startling to realize that Western Europe harbors an Oriental country. Here, East is West and West is East; in Spain the twain have met.

One of the most refreshing aspects of this land is the lack of racial discrimination. I ran across a few Spaniards along the southern coast who scornfully (and rather recklessly) disclaimed any Moorish blood but generally those I talked with were not only quick to acknowledge their Arab heritage, they were proud of it.

Fully one-third of the Spaniards and possibly a great many more are said to have Jewish blood. General Franco's mother's name—Bahamonde—is Jewish. Here as in other countries those surnames which mean something—Rosas, Luna, Castillo, and there are many—indicate Jewish origin. Again and again one picks it up in the hands, some eyes, the strong nose, and full lips that are characteristic of all peoples around the Mediterranean across which there has been constant interchange ever since those adventurous Semitic traders, the Phoenicians, first carried their commerce to its farthest end. For that matter, the Arabs themselves were a Semitic people.

Almost all the great families of Spain have Jewish forebears. Just as today they refurbish their fortunes by marriages with Cuban heiresses, so prior to the final expulsion of the Jews in 1492 the aristocracy found it expedient to incorporate well-dowered Jewish strains into their proud bloodlines. The Jews were the wealthiest element in the country, and by far the most useful. Scientists, doctors, savants, diplomats, and financiers—they were thoroughly appreciated by the kings and nobles as functionaries and administrators, but were increasingly resented by the Catholic clergy and by the mass of the population. Exuberant as they pushed the Moors farther and farther south, the Spanish people were not inclined to remain subservient to the Jews, to whom they found themselves constantly forced to turn; after a century of periodic massacres, they were expelled by reluctant order of Ferdinand and Isabella.

One hundred thousand Jews left Spain at this time. In a nation primarily agrarian and military, they represented almost the entire technical, financial, and professional ability; it is not surprising that their withdrawal had vast traumatic consequences from which (many say) the nation has never recovered.

Today Jewish families in Tetuán and Istanbul still cherish the keys to the houses in Toledo and Córdoba, whose doors their ancestors

closed behind them centuries ago. During the persecution of Jews by Hitler, Franco offered asylum in Spain to all who could prove their Spanish descent; a number managed to do so.

The story of the Jew in Spain is a saga rich in surprises. It interested me particularly to learn how profoundly the outlook of a persecuted people has affected the Spanish temperament as a whole. One of the most striking characteristics of the Spaniard is his disengaged attitude toward reality—"life is a dream." This negation of what goes on around him derived from the Jews, accustomed throughout their history to sublimating the bitterness of their suffering by deprecating that which existed for that which they hoped would come to pass. Today, for all his liveliness with companions, the Spaniard harbors a deep sense of tragedy. Unlike the Italian who is forever young, the Spaniard is born old. Left alone, he is a desperate and morose figure.

If the Jew contributed to the somberness of the Spanish temperament, the gypsy has provided the flashes of gaiety. The gypsy is Spain's delight, its bit of whimsy and self-indulgence, and its constant provocation.

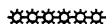
The Spaniard despises these carefree vagrants for their life of shameless hedonism and is exasperated by their lack of loyalty to anything or anyone. (At a hacienda where I stayed, Josefina and Concepción were two stalwart gypsy workers, christened—as are many gypsy boys—with girls' names to keep them off the military service records.) Meanwhile, he acknowledges their very great artistry, specifically in the field of song and dance. The flamenco of Andalusia, now considered the music and dance of all Spain, is heavily fired with gypsy inspiration; the best performers are likely to have gypsy blood.

Spaniards are bemused by the special flair the gypsy gives to his performance, whether in the bullring, a Madrid night club, or a whitewashed cave. Watching a gypsy entertainer one night on the beach at a Costa Brava village, a Spaniard in our group said: "Look at the way he moves—like a cat! His hands are as quick as a magician's. We have an expression for the way they seem to pluck at the air—*cazar moscas*—'catching flies.' Even to the way they flex a wrist or snap a finger they are inimitable."



Held by some authorities to be a tribe expelled from part of the Byzantium empire by Tamerlane, the gypsies poured into Europe through the Balkans in the early fifteenth century; they are known to have reached every Western country by 1450. In Spain the gypsy found a natural home. In many ways, he *is* Spain. Through his strong influence in Andalusia, the land of song and dance and the bullfight which fires the romantic dreams of the rest of Spain, he has doubtless contributed much of the dash and swagger, the bravado, and—most of all—*style* so inherently a part of the Spanish nature. The touch of *torero* that is in every Spaniard in turn reflects the touch of gypsy that is said to be in every topnotch *torero*.

Wanderers from distant Middle-Eastern lands, they have done their share to make of this corner of Europe an exotic country that belongs more to the East than to the West.



This happened outside the entrance to the Alhambra. A gray-haired woman had set up her tray of nuts and candy in the shade of the trees. I was curious about the mound of salted sunflower seeds and asked her to weigh me off a handful. But in my purse I could find

nothing smaller than a twenty-five-peseta note, in American currency about sixty-five cents.

She shook her head. "I cannot change it." As I hesitated, struck by the extreme modesty of this business so obviously based on sales in dribblets of centavos amounting to fractions of a cent, the woman handed me the paper of seeds. "Please accept this. It is a gift. I want you to have it."

I think the quality which appeals to me most about the Spaniards is a natural graciousness, an elegance of manner as free from condescension as it is of pettiness. The cavalier gesture, often on the part of those who like the candy vendor can least afford to make it, shows an aristocracy of attitude that makes me wince at the many times I have quibbled over some minor money or other matter. The lordly prodigality of the fifty-cent-a-day laborer who orders a glass or two of wine and leaves a little in the bottom of each (particularly true of the insouciant Andaluz) may seem silly to us, but it is part of the same nobility that keeps the peasant who has done you a favor from accepting a tip.

Unamuno wrote: "Spain is a nation of twenty-five million kings." Since then the population of kings has increased by approximately three million. The grand manner is as natural with a herdsman as it is with a duke; for in the eyes of God (and someone has commented that every Spaniard maintains a private pipeline to Heaven), kings and nobles are no better than anyone else.

Each individual is serene in the conviction that he is as good as the next, and probably better. In the dining room of one of the State Tourist Inns I watched with delight as the manager lectured a captive audience in the person of a cabinet minister—the very minister heading the department of *Información y Turismo* to which the manager owed his employment—on what was wrong with the Department of *Información y Turismo*. The manager had started in hotel work at the age of eight; his was the confidence of a person completely at ease in his role.

That may partly explain the lack of servility as yet to be found in Spain: each man recognizes his obligations in the social scheme and takes pride in fulfilling them without aspiring to what is beyond his

reach. A doorman gives the impression that a doorman's job is the best in the world, and that he is the best doorman in the profession. A *botones* (literally "buttons") paging in a hotel or handling wraps in a third-rate restaurant performs his job as though the only step above it were the dictatorship.

It would be impossible for a Spaniard to survive under Communism; he doesn't like being organized, or even told what to do. You don't order kings around.

The Spaniard's noted independence comes out in automatic reflex. "Inform a Spaniard sitting at this table that the paper wrappings from these lumps of sugar are to be put in that dish," the part-Spanish wife of a one-time Philippine ambassador to Washington said, "and he will scatter them everywhere else *but* in the dish!"

The whole idea of being a well-disciplined part of an organized whole is incompatible with the intensely individualized Spanish nature. "The Spanish soldier is particularly good at guerrilla work," a former officer with the Blue Division told me. "He performs best when he is more on his own."

He continued: "The individual behavior of the Spanish soldier is very good. But it is impossible for him to follow detailed instructions. The Spaniard decides for himself what is a good rule and what is a stupid one. He is too old for silly rules. Of course he thinks he is superior to his commanders anyway. In Spain we have a saying, 'The General doesn't matter.'"

The Spaniard's belief in his own pre-eminence stems from a variety of sources. Unlike other countries in Europe, Spain never went through a period of political serfdom. The Romans permitted the Iberian colony a generous measure of self-rule. Even under the Moors the Spaniard on his own land was a free man. His dignity of bearing is that of a people who have never had to bow to a yoke.

But it was the reconquest of Spain from the Moors (who being a non-Christian people were *ipso facto* an inferior one) which must have fired the brand-new nation with the first pleasing assurance of a superiority even semidivine—with God on the Spaniards' side they could not lose, nor could they do wrong. Such a partnership was enough to give confidence to any people. To have proven themselves

victors was not enough; in a frenzy of self-perfecting the Spaniards subjected themselves to the ordeal of fire as the Inquisition systematically went about cleaning out "impurities"; the sterling Christian nation that (in their own eyes) emerged naturally felt in a class by itself from those which had never been put to the purifying test.

Meanwhile, ever vaster areas of the globe were coming under Spanish domination. As masters of the greater part of Europe, the whole of Central and more than half of South America, plus a broad sweep covering what is now southern and western United States, with possessions in Asia and Africa, it is scarcely surprising that the Spaniards felt themselves a nation of conquerors, each man born to rule.

This pleasurable conviction was supported by the convenience of having a built-in serving class on hand to order around. The detritus of the Arab population (in the New World there were the Indians) performed those mundane tasks which the Spaniards themselves could not or would not do. Christianized Arabs with their considerable skill as builders and artisans, and converted Jews with their commercial talents, relieved the Spaniards of further tiresome chores, leaving them free to fulfill the gentlemanly pursuits of fighting and governing—or to perfect the graceful art of doing nothing. There was an additional valid reason for avoiding work: the leisure class of *hidalgos* (literally, "sons of somebody," a class below nobility but above that of laborers) was not taxed, whereas anyone making an effort to earn a living was.

Opprobrium from the very start was attached to the whole idea of having to work—an opprobrium in no way diminished through the centuries!

Unfortunately for this nation of kings, the changing times have made it increasingly difficult for all but a tiny segment not to expend a certain amount of effort in order to live. Barely enough to permit a man to qualify as *señor* (gentleman) is considered sufficient, and even this is undertaken with an offhand air. "Work" in Spain is a not-quite-nice word. To devote other than the most casual effort to earning a living comes close to being considered bad taste.

And yet perhaps nowhere in the world do people work as hard as many in Spain are forced to today—because they *are* forced to, by the instinct of survival. The Spaniard works only because he has to, or

because his volatile interest is engaged by a challenging job. I doubt if he is ever driven by conscience or duty, certainly not by inclination, and rarely indeed by avarice. A laborer accustomed to a lifetime of unrelenting effort will, the second the pressure lets up, stop work entirely—until forced to return to it. The owner of a *típico* restaurant in Madrid told me that in summer his downstairs bar is filled all day with laborers spending their springtime earnings. "They will not go back to work until they again need money."

In the lounge of my hotel in Barcelona one evening I commented to the waiter, discursive as he poured my after-dinner coffee: "You say that new industries are opening up every day. And yet I thought the Spaniard did not preoccupy himself with work!"

A man sitting nearby—he turned out to be an Andalusian from Granada—took this opportunity to crash the conversation: "*Con su permiso*: it is one thing to work, and quite another to be preoccupied by it."

To which I answered: "A further difference between us. Americans take their work seriously, and themselves lightly. Spaniards take themselves seriously—and their work lightly."

And put almost all they earn into making a good presentation.

In Spain appearance is everything. However bare the cupboard, the front shown the outside world must represent the greatest possible well-being.

A Portuguese with interests in Madrid said to me: "I cannot understand how the Spaniards can make such a big show when they have so little. Look at these tremendous palaces in almost every town. The first thing a conquistador did with his money from the New World was to set himself up in a handsome home that looked impressive from the outside even if inside there was nothing."

The illusion of grandeur extends to the lowest: in their off-duty hours even the working classes can pretend. A cook who makes four hundred pesetas a month (ten dollars) will spend one hundred pesetas to have a coat tailored; she will keep a steady appointment at the beauty parlor every two weeks to have her hair retouched.

The manager of a factory in Málaga told me that youths of that

city, who might not have enough to eat, nevertheless manage to buy the best raincoat available, the *trenchera* being *de rigeur* among young Spaniards—even though in Málaga it never rains.

The room-service waiter at the Palace corroborated this. Bringing me a sandwich late one night, he lingered to talk about how difficult life was for the majority of Spaniards. "The price of a suit," he told me, "is one month's salary."

"But look at all the well-dressed men on the streets!" I exclaimed. "Yes. And they are hungry."

Crazy as it often seems to us, there is something admirable about this capacity for self-denial in order to gratify self-respect.

On Sundays in the most wretched villages the youths lounging in rat-hole doorways or gathered before the café or strolling with their *novias* are turned out in clean white shirt, tie, and jacket. And the children: except for out-and-out street urchins, they seem forever dressed in their Sunday best. It is depressing to think of all the woman-hours of drudgery, without benefit of washing machines, that must go to turn out miniature ladies and gentlemen every time they step out of the house. Pride in his appearance is learned at an early age by every Spaniard—at least by the men. I found them far more meticulous in their dress than the women. Perhaps it is because it is through the men—each in his own mind still a cape-and-sword *caballero* of Old Spain—that the tradition of chivalry and the illusion of grandeur is carried down.

For some reason that elsewhere might make an interesting study, with Americans the whole idea of personal dignity has become archaic if not a little ridiculous. The Spaniard's *dignidad* is as inseparable a part of him as any physical member; and it is in no way ludicrous.

Unlike other peoples about whom it is easy to make fun where they differ from ourselves, one cannot make fun of the Spaniard. With all his inflated pride, his aspirations for elegance, his self-delusions—his innate dignity will command respect. The Spaniard may be ingenuous, or entertaining, or baffling, or infuriating, but he is never ridiculous.

On his part he is dumfounded by the lack of personal dignity displayed by other peoples. The French he shrugs off entirely, a nation without self-esteem. Americans. . . .

Spaniards find it incredible that Mr. Truman when filling the awesome office of President of the United States should have chosen to wear "silly" play shirts brightly printed with every kind of ridiculous subject. It baffles them that Americans should not only speak of President Eisenhower as "Ike," but should actually permit this absurd name in the headlines.

Dignity is the cloak of lonely people, the independent people of mountains and plains, who have developed an inner composure that is the result of self-reliance—quickly rubbed off in busy communities where each man is dependent upon others for virtually all his needs. Spain, composed of physically isolated compartments and long holding itself aloof from its neighbors, is a nation of lonely, independent people, each man a solitary monarch acknowledging allegiance to God alone.

Lift the Spaniard out of context, and kingly confidence can be shattered.

"All Spaniards are completely crazy. Therefore, there is no insanity in Spain."

So spoke a Sevillano as we strolled in the gardens of Seville's Alcázar with the fragrance of orange blossoms heavy in the April warmth. At the time his words meant little more to me than the amusing comment typical of an Andaluz.

The longer I remained in Spain the more substance his remark assumed. All of Spain suffers from a giant psychosis. For centuries isolated on their rocky point, Spaniards continue to live in a self-imposed trance—a dream-world created from a spectacular past, made possible by negation of an inglorious present—in which they are obsessed by a romantic image of themselves conjured from wishful thinking. Two nationally known intellectuals actually assured me at lunch one day that the landscape "typical" of Spain was not the great eroded center that makes such a dramatic impression on the visitor (and comprises fully three-fourths of the country), but the

prettily wooded hills and well-watered valleys of the Catalanian corner.

In their infatuation with the inexhaustibly fascinating subject of themselves the Spaniards are almost as bad as Texans, the Irish, and U.S. Marines. Two women with whom I shared a sidewalk table in Albacete late one afternoon soon came around to the inevitable question: "How do you like Spain?"

"I am completely enamored of it," I answered, happy to be telling the truth while giving them the answer they expected. "Particularly the people—"

"Yes, Spanish men are very valiant," one of the women interrupted, her voice complacent. "Spanish women are very chic. The Spanish countryside is very beautiful. The food in Spain is very healthy."

Lack of opportunity to make comparisons has given these engaging people a most comforting impression of themselves. Objectivity in Spain is almost impossible. The average Spaniard is too introverted to be able to get outside of himself, and financial and political restrictions have made it difficult for him to get outside of the country. Even if he wanted to. For, coupled with the Spaniard's self-bemusement, is what Madariaga calls "the famous Spanish indifference."

A Spanish news correspondent in New York described his own people with candor: "Our minds are closed—cemented shut. We are always ready to deliver an opinion, but we are not interested in comparing our views with anyone else's. A Spaniard will travel to the United States only to confirm opinions already made."

The Spaniard is indifferent to anything in which he cannot see himself projected—and intensely subjective about all else. I asked a young Andalusian why the bullfight audience is so vicious, quick to turn on a *torero* who fumbles.

"Because each Spaniard identifies himself with the *torero*. It is ourselves we see down there in the ring, challenging a charging beast with the courage each of us secretly wished he had. When the fighter does well, it is ourselves we acclaim. When he is afraid, we feel ourselves made ridiculous. Naturally we are furious and turn against him."

One historian, in speaking of the striking differences between the

Portuguese and Spaniards despite similar racial and historical backgrounds and lack of geographic barriers, commented: "The nature of the Portuguese is to look outward. The Spaniard looks inward. And that's what makes the Spaniard interesting!"

Everything about this country tends to throw the individual back upon himself. The peninsula is cut off from the continent by a mountain barrier. Each section is isolated from the rest by the nature of the terrain. Each town and village is withdrawn within itself, as spiritually confined by defensive walls as once they literally were. Each street presents a blank face, the life behind its front withdrawn to the deeply private core of each home.

Even the windowless walls of the churches indicate a zeal turned fiercely inward.

It is small wonder that the Spaniard himself is withdrawn, isolated within himself, harboring a well of loneliness, deep, dark and still, from which he looks out upon the world with brooding calm—what traveler in Spain or Hispano-America has not encountered that steady, silent look?—an inner calm that serves as an exquisitely sensitive receiving board constantly reacting to impressions.

From this acute sensitivity derives the Spaniard's renowned intuition, permitting him to sense instantly, for instance, if a person is *simpático* or *antipático*, although he might not be able to explain why in words.

I found the Spaniards very, very easy to win. A pleasant word about his country or his people—and his house, his shirt, the meal on the table and the mule in the field are yours. Praise the sky over Madrid and he will all but bow and say "Thank you." Complain about the weather, and he turns sullen as though he personally were to blame. For he is equally easy to offend.

His most cherished, and most vulnerable, possession is his honor.

Each Spaniard strives for insulation against all elements disturbing to his self-assurance. The center of his own universe, he moves within an aura of complacency, tightly wrapped in self-esteem. Modesty is a virtue unknown in Spain. One day at a little *típico* restaurant in Madrid I called the manager over. "I thought you would like to know

that we think you have one of the best restaurants in Madrid—”

He drew back indignantly. “*One* of the best! This is *the* best restaurant in Madrid!” I had insulted him!

I wish that I could have been there the day José Luís Dominguín, *matador de toros*, took exception to the accolade given another bull-fighter. Dominguín strutted into the center of the ring and struck his chest: “No! *I* am the best bullfighter in the world!” Which, with the possible exception of the Venezuelan César Girón, he probably is.

A Valencian confessed to me: “This may not sound modest—I do not believe in modesty, but then neither am I a *fanfarrón*. I can tell you frankly that I am among the ten best artists in Spain.” I am sure that privately he regarded himself as *the* best.

Self-doubt is a luxury which the Spaniards cannot yet afford. The constant need to build up their own ego could indicate—it occurred to me—a basic insecurity that gnaws at the self-assurance of many.

Part of the giant psychosis is to deprecate that which is out of reach. There could be a tinge of sour grapes in the attitude of the low-salaried clerk who, knowing he will never enjoy money or travel, affects a lofty disinterest in both. Like many another nationality, Spaniards cling desperately to any point on which they can feel superior to Americans, “culture” being the main quality we are said to lack.

For all the constant self-doctoring the Spanish national ego receives, it still suffers some bad moments. Certain things cannot be denied. Most galling reminder that Spain is no longer the great nation of several centuries back is the fact of a British possession within the shadow of the Spanish coast. To every Spaniard Gibraltar is a humiliating symbol of steady loss of prestige through the centuries.

The first blow to self-confidence and pride came, of course, with the disastrous defeat of the Armada in 1588. . . .

The Spaniards were so busy going out and conquering the world that they never bothered to learn how to manage themselves at home. European wars, bungling in Madrid, revolutions in the New World—in quick succession or simultaneously—steadily deflated the too quick expansion of the empire. It wasn’t until the Spanish American War left the nation bereft of all but the last and least of her colonies that Spain belatedly “came to.” She hardly knew what had hit her.

Now, for the first time, an analytical eye was turned on the country by Spaniards themselves: a group of scholars, philosophers, and writers—the “Generation of ’98.” The sorrowful sum of their verdict is best expressed by one of them, Ortega y Gasset, in the title of his book, *Invertebrate Spain*. Merciless in their self-criticism, this group claimed that Spain today is the pathetic product of a long period of internal decay.

The Generation of ’98 may have started a cult of self-flagellation. “We are decadent,” a highly cultured Catalan told me. “Spain is similar to China in that the population is made up of ignorant masses which must be herded like cattle. The Spaniards of today are not the same proud people of several centuries back.”

On a terrace looking down upon Toledo I made some platitude to my host about the tragedy of Spain’s decline.

“Decline? Decline from what! Spain had only just become a nation the very year the New World was discovered. The population of the entire country was only seven million, less than that of New York City today. And yet we undertook to conquer vast areas of the world while engaging at the same time in wars in Europe. It is remarkable that we managed as well as we did. But in trying to master so much of the globe, Spain was attempting far more than she could at that time handle. No. Our trouble is not in decline from greatness. It is right here, in the head of the Spaniard. The Spaniard has a gypsy mentality. We are erratic, volatile, illogical, incapable of thinking ahead of co-ordinated effort for the good of the whole.”

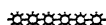
He stopped and smiled bitterly. “Why, look at the way our Spanish contractors bid for the construction jobs on the American bases. Instead of getting together beforehand and agreeing on a bottom price, they underbid each other until we have agreed to do the jobs at *less* than the Americans were prepared to pay. How you must be laughing at us!”

The new humility contrasts strangely with the more familiar Spanish self-esteem. Matching proverbs with a guide in Santiago de Compostela, I offered: “*Más vale cabeza de ratón que cola de león*”—“it is better to be the head of a mouse than the tail of a lion.”

“No!” he said quickly. “Not always true. It depends upon the

'lion.' Spain today is happy to be the tail of a great nation like the United States."

Spain's Military Agreement with the United States and, more recently, its admission into the United Nations has given Spanish prestige a tremendous lift. There are signs of a new attitude. Just as the misguided knight from La Mancha in the end recognizes, a little wistfully, the windmills for what they were, so the Spanish people may, as the country continues to emerge from its isolation and take greater part in world affairs, find a fresher, sounder basis for national pride.



It is said that "there is no such thing as a Spaniard," and yet the majority of Spaniards share certain characteristics peculiar to themselves. These are: an instinctive courtliness (when they are not bashing someone over the head); a need to express themselves among friends; and—well, the impulse to bash someone over the head.

Madariaga wrote that the Spaniard is the very reverse of gregarious, and yet on any bright day in any community one gets the impression that the whole town has turned out to mingle in the sunshine.

"I can't understand these Spaniards," a Portuguese customs official at the border station between Badajoz and Elvas commented. "This *alegría* of theirs, this gaiety—they're always ready to stop whatever they're doing and have a drink or talk or go to a movie with friends. In short, to amuse themselves. What have they got to be so carefree about? Spain is tragically poor. Life for the majority of Spaniards is very hard. They're still suffering from a terrible war—"

Even the most desperately poor grab at any excuse to put pleasure first. There is an expression for it: "*Echar trabajo por la espalda*"—"toss work over your shoulder." At a fishing village where I lingered, the fleet of boats failed to put out one clear Saturday dawn: that afternoon there was to be some sort of inconsequential ceremony at the schoolhouse, sufficient reason for the fishermen to forfeit their less-than-a-dollar daily pay.

"Living in Spain is like being on a perpetual holiday," a Polish doctor told me between flamenco acts at a Madrid nightspot where we

plaza, up and down the avenues, along the brighter arteries of the parks. The Spaniard relaxes best in public places where he is under no obligation as either host or guest. Spanish private parties are likely to be deadly.

The zest of the Spaniard is hard to hold down. A room-service waiter at the Palace Hotel told me one evening that he and his *novia* had been engaged for five years; they could not afford to get married. It was the same with many young couples, he said. "The truth is, on what one makes one cannot live."

I said, "Then explain to me how it is that every café in Madrid, every restaurant, every bar, every moving-picture house is filled every evening. And on Sundays the huge football stadium, and in season the bullring as well. If most Spaniards cannot afford to live, who are all these people with time and money to enjoy themselves?"

He smiled. "It is true that we don't make enough to get married on. But meanwhile we do not deprive ourselves. On my night off we always go to a *cine* and to a café afterward."

Where a German or Swede or practically anyone else in the non-tropical world would lead a life of grinding privation in order to save for a wedding, or a new roof, or whatever, this young man and millions like him prefer to wring from each day what pleasure they can. And probably wisely: existence for most in Spain is so very harsh that not to do so would reduce these people into grubbing drones without heart or soul.

My own theory is that the apparent exuberance of the Spaniards springs, not from any natural geniality or gregariousness, but from that deep-rooted aloneness, a longing to establish contact with others. And so, you find the Spaniard forever seeking company in cafés, or perhaps just walking the streets and plazas, mingling with the crowds. "The Spaniard is very friendly," a Spanish reporter in New York said, "but very lonely."

When spurts of curiosity, interest, or passion no longer stir him, he sinks back into his natural state of indifference.

The gaiety of the Spaniards has a "drink and be merry" quality, as though by having another *copita*, or lingering a bit longer to chat with one's neighbor, or taking a last turn the length of the avenue,

one could negate, or at least put off, the truths of hunger and debt and personal inconsequence. It is an *alegría* compounded of delirium, desperation, and drama. In the place of joyousness there is something of the compulsive gratification in the gesture of dashing the champagne glass against the hearth.

Madrid is the most delightful city I know; everyone amuses himself to the fullest; the whole atmosphere is lively—it is the liveliness of a cocktail party where each guest seeks some excuse to linger. The fashionable summer capital of San Sebastián during August is wildly gay—with the thought-drowning gaiety of the nickelodeon that never stops. In the charming town of Jerez and other cities of the south the whole population turns out on a warm Sunday to fill the sidewalk tables—even the carefree Andalusian seems driven by a need to escape from himself. The only consistently and truly “happy” city I found in Spain was La Coruña, up in Galicia, whose people it is said live only to divert themselves. (“Vigo works; Pontevedra sleeps; Santiago prays and studies; La Coruña plays.”)

But the Galicians, along with the Catalans and Basques, lack the firebrand qualities of the majority of Spaniards, those Spaniards of the arid tableland that slopes down into the Moorish south—the Spaniards that one means when one speaks of Spain.

As the Spaniard’s need for noise and bright lights springs from his sense of isolation, so too (it occurred to me) does the special value he places on friendship: *amistad*. He wants the reassurance that he is not alone, that others share his problems and understand his feelings.

Whether it is to escape from the prison of himself, or an outlet for the extraordinary energy these people are constantly generating, or both, the Spaniard is always ready to meet with friends for the favorite pastime of rich and poor alike: *tertulia*.

Tertulia is not exactly conversation, for conversation implies a rational interplay of opinions (impossible with a Spaniard), nor is it discussion (equally impossible), but rather a hurling of words at each other as fast and hard as possible on any subject whatever, each person speaking as final authority and all speaking at once.

Tertulia with a Spaniard is as much a necessity in his daily life as

bread and wine are with his meal. "The day we no longer have *tertulia*," a friend active in Madrid's cultural circles said, "I don't care to live. You know, I consider this new interest some Spaniards are taking in canasta very ominous—"

Tertulia to the foreign ear sounds like handfuls of gravel hurled in quick succession at a windowpane. If one person should miraculously have the floor, the flow pours out with the perfect timing, inflection, and gestures of a well-rehearsed monologue, without a moment's falter for a word. The manager of the inn at Gredos awed me with his ability to give what amounted to extemporaneous speeches in answer to any remark I might make; he would take a deep breath, touch his lips with his tongue, while in his eyes I could see him lining up his points, then it would begin, continuing with the steady grind of a movie projector, the thoughts beautifully expressed, until I broke the flow with another remark.

It is irresistible for a Spaniard to get into a conversation even when it does not concern him. Stop to ask questions of a man on the street, and four others will come over from the nearest café entrance to offer their advice, no two of course ever agreeing.

It is the Andalusian who excels in the art of making conversation out of nothing—and who expresses himself as graciously as he does freely.

"I hope it will be a clear day for the bullfight tomorrow," I remarked to the waiter bringing me a cup of coffee at a sidewalk café in Seville.

The answer came smoothly: "A bullfight without sunshine is like a garden without flowers."

"The blood of the Spaniard is very bitter—with a sweet base," a Sevillano told me; and: "Americans in Spain are like twelve-year-olds. If they remain, they will quickly become fifty-year-olds."

I suspect that Spaniards themselves don't know half the time what they're saying. I know they don't remember half of what they've said. Throw in a remark like "As you said a moment ago—" and the chances are the Spaniard will look blank; he has no recollection of what he said a moment ago, even when you quote him word for word. One rarely gets the same version of the same tale twice from the same person.

It is possible that the Spaniards embroider freely in order not to bore you, or (more likely) not to bore themselves. I asked the Polish doctor if he did not find them always racing just one step ahead of ennui.

"Perhaps," he said. "These people are so alive that they require fresh stimuli all the time to hold their interest. If they can't find it around them, they simulate it by giving a new twist to their words. It's what makes them so diverting."

Strange people. Apathetic and indifferent unless motivated into action by necessity, friendship, fear—or boredom. It is novelty which intrigues. Confine the Spaniard to a routine, and he languishes. From a German engineer in Bilbao: "No one can do such an artistic job of hammering a dent out of a car as the Spaniards. Each dent is different and therefore of interest—it becomes a game. And no one can turn out more careless routine mechanical service."

Promptly bored with the familiar, the Spaniards are a people of spontaneous, volatile enthusiasms as quick to collapse as they are to flare up.

"It is difficult for us to maintain any perseverance of thought," one of my Barcelona friends told me a little wistfully. "I'm afraid we are not constant. Loyalty to one political idea, for instance, is very rare."

"The man of stable emotions is suspect," an Englishman told me. "Unlike the British who distrust emotion, the Spaniard distrusts those incapable of emotion. Those who have been wrong and 'see the light' are much more understandable to Spaniards than the man of unchanging, rocklike loyalties. Subject to excesses themselves, they tend to understand and forgive the extremes."

When I asked why it was necessary to have such rigid moral censorship in the movies (kissing, considered obscene, is never portrayed), I was told by an Old Spanish Hand: "Why ask for trouble? These people are too highly inflammable to be shown anything provocative."

"Explosive—Danger!" could well be marked on every Spaniard south of the northern Celtic strip! But one cannot keep a tight lid on a pan of boiling water without permitting an occasional release. . . .

The high point culminating Valencia's annual week of fiesta is Saturday night when the *fallas*—those elaborate constructions put up all over town lampooning personalities and problems of the day—are set afire. Within a few hours hundreds of thousands of dollars in investment have, literally, gone up in flames.

On Monday morning the first collections are made to finance next year's *fallas*.

In a country so manifestly poor this use of money—which could so much more sensibly be spent on badly needed orphanages and schools and clinics—sounds crazy. But how dull, how hopelessly drab the year would be for the Valencianos without the *fallas* to look forward to!

In towns and villages all over Spain life would scarcely be worth living without at least one big blowoff a year in a *feria* and a bullfight or two. For what else is there to break the monotony of the days, to dream about? A wedding. A birth. A death. Once upon a time, a revolution. . . .

There is another reason for these periodic paroxysms: the need of a highly charged people to be deeply stirred—and to express themselves.

All who know Spaniards are conscious of the underlying energy they generate. Given free expression, it is likely to take the form of smashing up the scenery. For this reason, there is usually someone around, in a gray-green uniform and carrying a firearm, to say no, no.

My impression is that the Spaniard is forever throwing off sparks from the surface to free repressed energies, and fend off the natural apathy that is deep-rooted in the soul of each. . . . The apathy that is a form of fatigue when tremendous energy is held too long in check. . . .

The excitable, voluble, inconstant Spaniard harbors his brooding psyche, the deep, still core of loneliness which he taps for his stoicism and resignation, while periodically he is moved to seek an outlet for smoldering emotions stronger than those which minor energies can exhaust.

The ferocious pitch of audience excitement at a major football game; the abandonment in behavior at the *ferias*; the agonized, highly sensual movements of flamenco building up to drumbeat tension—all indicate a deep-laid chord of passion bottled up in the ordinarily

well-behaved Spaniard, likely to result in violence and excess when the plug is out—as evidenced by the atrocities committed by both sides during the Civil War.

A languid Madrileño told me: "I go to the bullfight because it stirs me. It is the only thing which really stirs me. Everything else—" He shrugged.

It is at the bullfight that one comes closest to sensing the peculiar need of the lively-morose Spaniard for an emotional outlet. The sensation of the *aficionado* looking down upon the ring is a combination of extreme anxiety—and extreme boredom. I know for I always experienced it: nervous tension along with a sickening lethargy; the result is both exhilaration and exhaustion. You are waiting, waiting for something to happen, and when it does—whether an exquisite series of passes of unbelievable daring, or a body tossed suddenly into the air, or the ragged figure of a breathless *espontáneo* leaping into the ring—one's deepest being turns over.

The defiance of death in bloody, highly personal combat—compulsive with the *torero* and deeply stirring to the onlookers—appeals to a peculiarly Spanish atavism. . . .

In Spain nothing is in moderation. When it rains, the already eroded earth is thrashed by downpours that sweep precious topsoil toward the sea. When it is warm, the heat sears. In cold weather the country is numbed by cruel winds.

It is not surprising that a land of violent extremes should produce a people given to violent outbursts.

When a Spaniard is moved to action, it is likely to be an intensive spurt. Writers have a habit of turning out their novels in two-week frenzies of effort. The only impulse a Spaniard voluntarily satisfies in moderation is the one to drink—with a bar every fifty feet to gratify these moderate thirsts.

"Spaniards are not builders. They are destroyers," an American with more than a decade in Spain told me, "their many fine cathedrals and public buildings to the contrary notwithstanding. The moment a Spaniard is freed from constraint, he wants to hear the sound of shattered glass and splintering wood. And, of course, he is chronically

against whatever government is in office, unless he personally benefits from it."

I asked a former Loyalist how he could explain the ghastly atrocities of the Civil War, in some of which I suspected he himself had taken part. He said: "We are a mixture of all the races that have swept over Spain, with the Arabs having left the greatest sediment, and so are a mixture of various and clashing temperaments. This is brought to a boil by the climate—we are crazed by a burning sun and embittered by an arid soil. The lack of liberty that we have suffered is such that when authority is lifted we commit the worst crimes. It is a natural reaction, just as the passion of the Spaniard is due to the curbing of sexual hunger during youth under the discipline of the Church. . . ."

The whole length of Spanish history sputters with outbreaks of disorder and violence. In Spain the Anarchists have long formed a recognized political party; their platform advocates the downthrow of all offices implementing law and order; the civic control to be set up in their place has yet to be defined.

Observing the quiet, well-mannered crowds on the streets, it is hard to realize that the moment restrictions are eased, or a tacit go-ahead signal by the authorities is given, people look for the nearest person they can hit over the head. Violence takes simple forms. The rule is, when in doubt, beat him up. Spaniards love to beat each other up.

I never attended a football game in Spain but was told by several who did that the audience gets into such a stew at times it seems the game is being played in the stands. "Spaniards do not play sports to play," an architect told me. "We play to fight."

He knew cases, he said, where the members of the defeated team would follow those of the winning team home on the streetcar in order to beat them up at the first opportunity.

I remarked that he made his people sound like undisciplined children. I elaborated: "Every child is born with atavistic impulses, bawling when he wants something and reaching out with prehensile fingers to grab. He has to be trained to consider the world around him. Civilization is the exercise of self-discipline."

He thought a moment then gave a short laugh. "Perhaps we Spaniards are not yet civilized."

I will confess that I led him into it, but I'm glad he said it—and not I.

Many Spaniards, I found, readily admit their need for strong discipline.

"We control ourselves only when forced to do so," this same young architect said on another occasion—we were riding in my car from Madrid to Seville and talked without stopping the entire way. "A man will shout at his wife in the privacy of his home because there is no one to stop him; but in public he is well-behaved, because he knows he has to be."

I asked a noted sportsman why the owners of private hunting preserves do not limit the daily bag of birds and so spread out the intensive season instead of cleaning out as many as thirty-five hundred *perdices*—black and white and slow-winged—in a single shoot.

"You must understand," he said, "that we Spaniards when our blood is aroused are bloodthirsty. Latins—Spanish Latins, that is—are that way. Once we start killing we cannot stop."

I faced another Spaniard with this. "All huntsmen are bloodthirsty," he said. "Nevertheless, it is true that with a weapon in our hands we Spaniards may enjoy a special enthusiasm. It is what makes the Spanish Infantry the best in the world."

If the first man's remark is applicable to the country's most privileged class, how much more so it must be to the masses—ignorant, superstitious, emotionally unstable, currently held in line only by the Church and police.

A most intriguing feature about Spaniards generally is that here is a nation as yet not overcivilized. Stuck off on their rugged peninsula, with little contact from the outside world to smooth down rough edges, these children of nature still retain certain characteristics of their principal forebears: the barbarian Vandals and Visigoths, and fierce Arab and even fiercer Berber tribesmen.

Havelock Ellis holds that the Spanish character is fundamentally "not only African, but primitive, and—in the best and not in any depreciative sense of the word—savage."

I wish there were a gentler word than "savage," and "barbarian" also seems a little strong, while "primitive" inadequately describes a

people—exclusive of the *gente baja* (the ignorant masses, literally “low people”)—so enormously complex.

An exporter in Barcelona told me: “In time of war a Spaniard drops his veneer of civilization in a week, where it might take a man of another nationality a month.”

Agony and blood and death are powerful strains woven into the tough fabric of the Spanish temperament, a temperament as morbid as it is gay. To try to equalize the cruelty of the *corrida* with that of fox hunting, as many apologists for bullfighting do, is ridiculous.

Of course Spaniards are cruel. Horribly cruel.

But compared to the atrocities of the twentieth century, science-refined and performed in cold blood, the cruelty of these barbarians, if barbarians they are, is almost “wholesome” in its savagery; nor can those who have applied the highest technical knowledge to the art of annihilation, by gas chamber and other ingenious methods, be excused as an impassioned, primitive semi-Oriental people; instead they represented the height of the “civilization” which the Spaniards are said to lack.

The cruelty of the Spaniard can be explained, if certainly never excused.

First, Spaniards do not recognize what might be suffering for others as such because it is not that to themselves. Centuries of narrow living extracted from a grudging land have hardened them until they are nervously organized to withstand physical anguish. Throughout the expansion of the empire in meeting the challenge of explorations and colonization it became almost a national objective to bear pain; men volunteered for and stood up under staggering hardship, holding a contempt for physical weakness. Himself relatively insensitive to discomfort and suffering, the “cruel” Spaniard tended to be indifferent to the suffering of others, and therefore inflicted it more casually. They were cruel. But if they could hand it out, they could also take it.

Another factor: the Spaniard’s strong Arab-Berber heritage included an Oriental indifference to suffering, along with Islamic deprecation of earthly discomforts. Unfortunately, this strong Oriental heritage also includes a streak of ferocious cruelty. “It is true,” an

Arabic-speaking Andalusian brought up in Tangier told me. "The Arab is sadistic."

The Spaniard *is* cruel, with a special indifference to the suffering of animals, as anyone who has ever seen Spanish spurs or a Spanish bit will know. I am an *aficionado* of the bullring, but I could not have been before the horses were protected by quilted skirts—a device inaugurated some thirty years ago, not to spare suffering to the horse, but because with the advance of the motor age the diminishing supply of horses for the bullring had to be protected! Today a horse is good for ten to twelve fights, I was told. Whereas previously . . . it was eleven horses, the retired bullfight impresario told me (with what came close to sounding like nostalgia for the good old days) that he had once seen killed by a single bull.

How could anyone but people of Spanish blood sit through that—as *entertainment*?

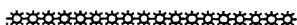
All Spaniards are everything Spanish. I am only one of many who have noted the contrast between the everyday, well-ordered Spaniard, and his fever-eyed other self. Startling as some of their characteristics may be to those of us from more "progressive" Western nations, the Spaniard can also claim many splendid characteristics which we have lost, the strong features of a frontier people as yet unsoftened by over-civilization.

Spain is a dream world, steeped in mysticism, locked in tradition, charged with violence, inhabited by the most delightful, the most courtly, the most gracious, barbarians.

PART

III

THE LIFE



ONE AFTERNOON during Holy Week in Seville I took an American acquaintance into the country for a drive. It was almost dusk when we found ourselves heading back for the main highway, through the town of Marchena. The streets were crowded—with men, only men, not a woman in sight. It amused me and I called out to a pair of youths: “Where are the women?”

The nearer one grinned. “Languishing in their houses.” (*Muriendo*, literally “dying.”)

I am about to make some sweeping generalizations to which many exceptions can be found, particularly among intellectuals in the big cities, always the first to break with tradition.

In this country and its Hispano-American derivatives it's strictly a man's world. Like his Oriental forebears who established the pattern, a Spaniard feels free to do whatever he pleases, without censure, while confining the women of his family within a moral straightjacket. There are only two kinds of women: those who belong in the home, and those encountered on the street.

Aside from the tremendous pride and pleasure a father takes in his children, a husband seeks his relaxation and entertainment outside the family circle, specifically in the clubs and cafés. A “married bachelor” might tone down his activities for the first few years which see

him (God willing) through the start of a family, after which he is ready with renewed zest for the first amorous adventure that finances, opportunity, and initiative make possible.

I don't know whether it's hot blood or habit, but a Spaniard with any woman has only one thought in mind. Only rigid rules defining what "nice" women do and don't do, and vigilant chaperonage, preserve—from his own advances—the wrapped-in cellophane, never-touched-by-human-hand state he demands in the woman he will marry. It is made difficult for a girl to be alone with a man at any time, and impossible after ten at night. The opportunity implies the act.

To those of us used to the independence of women and the free-and-easy association between the sexes that prevail in the rest of the non-Hispanic world, the degree to which a Spanish woman must be circumspect is unbelievable. In the provincial capital of Albacete one afternoon two well-dressed women, looking for a table at the crowded sidewalk café, asked if they could share ours with my mother and me. We fell into conversation. They told me that it would be inconceivable for one of them, by herself, to stop in a café, or even to be out on the street alone at this hour. Indeed, to be out on the street at all, if by herself, a woman must walk purposefully along with a definite objective, such as the market or shops; she must never under any circumstances take a stroll alone in the park or through the plaza.

Foreign women traveling alone, strolling alone, stopping in cafés alone, as I did, are targets for interesting conjecture. I shudder now to think of how some of the offhand remarks I often made must have been interpreted by Spaniards too polite to show their surprise—and curiosity.

My personal theory is that the Spaniard—the man with sensitivity and imagination, who from hearsay, books, or movies is aware of other, freer ways of life, where men and women can be friends as well as lovers—is dreadfully lonely. Married men as well as bachelors.

He dreams of a companionship in which all interests are shared and discussed. In his own world it is impossible to "talk" to a woman. Therefore, when he finds himself doing so with some tourist who trays his way, freed from the strain of having to make time, speaking of everything from politics to personal ambitions, it is a novel and



warming experience; he is likely to fall flat on his face in love. This is less a compliment to the woman than it is an indication of a vacuum in his own emotional life; virtually the first sympathetic American, French, or English girl who comes along can fill it.

The Spaniard who introduced himself to me in the lounge of the hotel at Vigo was a little hard, I thought, on his own people. "Spanish women have no personality. They live and love from the heart. They are very boring."

Poor women! The chances are that they are nothing more than what the men have taken pains through the centuries to make them. Activity, mental or otherwise, has never been expected of them. Dating from harem days, the role of the Spanish wife has been to sit around the home, as luscious and lethargic as a mound of Turkish

delight. So much for the average Spanish woman, particularly in the provinces. Those seen in better hotels and restaurants and at private parties are without peer, at least for chic. No one can wear black and a string of pearls with the elegance of Spanish women.

It is the sophisticated women of this wealthier class who provide the contradiction to the picture of a world in which only the men have fun. In this country as elsewhere, morality is a matter of what you can get away with.

Currently, young people of all classes are being brought up in as morally antiseptic an atmosphere as the Church can achieve. And it evidently works, at least with the girls. A young newspaper woman told me that in the girls' club in Madrid where she lives there is rarely any mention of men. "It would not occur to a girl to think of a man in an intimate relationship," she said, "or as any sort of sweetheart except a *fiancé*. We may sometimes talk of our dreams of marriage but that is all."

"During the Republic young people were given too much liberty," a friend who herself must have been of this generation said. "When the War broke out, in many areas there was a complete lapse of morality."

The Spaniards have now swung to the other extreme in an excess of prudery. The beach at San Sebastián is patrolled by Keystone-Cop guards to see that no *brief* briefs are worn, that no bathers go through such "suggestive" motions in public as buttoning or unbuttoning a wrap or taking off a shirt. (The Costa Brava, I can report, is wide open.) In Seville during the *feria* one suffocating day I put on a skimpy topped summer dress, then wore a scarf to cover my shoulders. Evidently it did not cover enough. In the crowds I felt a sharp nail dig into my back where it must have been bared. A friend of mine sitting at a sidewalk café in Madrid had a perfectly strange woman come up to tell her to pull her skirt down further over her knees.

And yet again and again in this primly proper country one notes features flagrantly provocative. Spanish women for all their modesty have an extraordinary habit of lifting their skirts behind when they sit down—a startling gesture to be seen in public and one perfected with special flip and dash by the girls of the street. In Seville, that

fortress of decorum, during the *feria* when the open-faced *casetas* lining the fairways look like strings of one-room stage-sets, the flounced skirts draped over the backs of those chairs turned from the passersby leave in full view the wearer's prettily starched and ruffled rear.

In Madrid, Barcelona, and Valencia women are making interesting headway into the professions and the world of business. But except for small groups of "intellectuals" and the fashionable and rich, the truth is that the Spanish woman is rarely found far from the home.

One common feature distinguishes the Spanish wife and mother in all classes but the lowest: a serene expression. Hers is the placid face of a woman consecrated to the role allotted her.

It is a very important role.

Confined to the home, she turns her whole attention to it. A transformation in her character takes place. As she sublimates every other interest to the sole aim of raising children, she gains immeasurably in stature.

I came away from Spain deeply impressed by the role the mother plays in a family, and by the respect and deference that is accorded her by all in the household.

A friend of mine boards with the widow of an army officer and her three half-grown children. He said: "The whole life of the apartment revolves around Pepita. She never has to raise her voice. The children think instinctively of her wishes before they consider their own. There is never the slightest question as to who comes first."

Someone, I think Havelock Ellis, has called the Spanish woman "a tame savage." Doubtless there are wives who as they mature in their responsibilities feel free within the privacy of the home to let fly at their men's peccadillos.

Catholicism may hold the Spanish family together and force the woman to make the best of the lot from which she can't escape, but a special unity and strength is generated in the Spanish home that is not characteristic of other Catholic societies.

In Spain nothing is permitted to stand in the way of the *construction* of a well-knit family, even if the father largely lives apart from its intimate life. The romance that makes the rest of the world go round

is far too frivolous a factor to serve as the basis for marriage. Love is little more than primordial instinct, and instinct, according to one authority, is almost always "anti-eugenic." To breed and educate children, Spanish Catholics believe, is man's most important mission on earth.

But there is another factor responsible for the solidarity of the Spanish family, as compared to the easily shattered structure of marriages elsewhere. One of the elements of the very "backwardness" of the country, it is, ironically, what to us has become the greatest luxury: a servant class.

"The more advanced a country is, the less important the family," Ortega y Gasset wrote.

According to this Spanish author, what holds a family together is the freedom to enjoy each other made possible by domestic help. "In every country family life today is important in direct ratio to the available amount of domestic service."

If this is true, and I believe it is, it explains some of the uneasiness with which many Spaniards face any "progress" which might threaten such institutions as the family.

And no one is more suspicious of any such changes, for the most obvious reasons, than the Catholic Church.

All over Spain one sees women in black.

Three years in solid black for a parent, six months for a brother, three for a second cousin. Entire families immerse themselves luxuriantly in mourning. I counted eight black bows on the elaborately braided head of one black-pinafores child.

Among Spaniards there is a compulsion, shared with all elemental peoples, to make a fetish of death, and on occasion a fiesta. "Spanish Catholicism is different from any other Catholicism," a Spaniard in the United States told me before I sailed. "We are in love with death."

It is possible that their distinctive brand of Catholicism has influenced the Spanish temperament, but it is more likely that the Spanish temperament produced the brand of Catholicism.

I have been told that Catholicism in France is "intellectual," accepted more by the mind than by the emotions. In Spain it is mystic,

militant, and strangely masochistic, expressing with maximum drama the emotional seekings of a passionate people. Spaniards by nature cannot walk freely in the diffused sunlight of a benevolent creed; they must have it concentrated upon them, as though through a magnifying glass, until it burns.

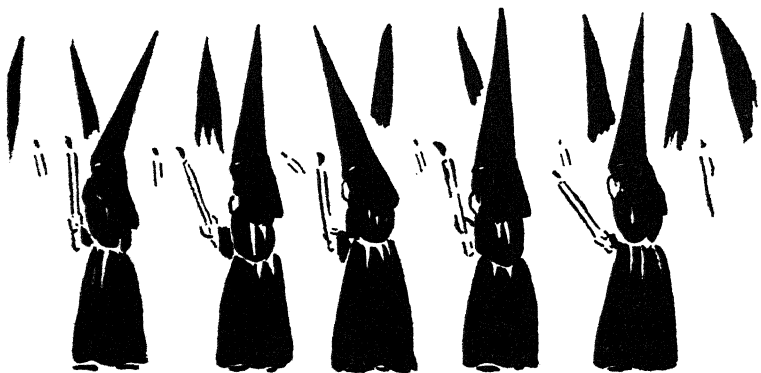
Somewhere along the road of Christianity in Spain the basic and most beautiful principle of Christ's teaching—brotherly love—was lost. On this a Spanish-Mexican wrote me: "Our Catholicism is more preoccupied with Christ's passion and death than with the gentler aspects of His mission on earth, His love of children, His healing powers, His Sermon on the Mount. . . ."

The appeal of Spanish Catholicism is not to compassion directed at others, but to anguish turned in upon oneself. The piteous expressions of Virgin Mothers and macabre figures of a blood-drained, gory Christ are designed expressly to wrench at the heart; in the suffering they portray is sublimated the personal privation of those who kneel before them. On Good Friday millions of devout Catholics "experience" the agonies of the Crucifixion. In no other Catholic country as in Spain and its former colonies do penitents turn out in such numbers during Holy Week in a spirit of self-flagellation.

Spanish Catholicism offers misery an outlet. Women whose homes are devoid of all color are lifted from drabness by the richness of altar ornaments, stained glass, embroidered vestments, vivid murals. Owning nothing themselves, they can feel that the treasury of the chapel is theirs.

When I first made the trite observation to a Spaniard that it seems strange to find a horde of priceless objects—such as those of the Virgin of Guadalupe—in a community of greatest poverty, he answered:

"You don't understand. Those treasures give the poor people of Guadalupe a sense of being more fortunate than anyone else. Take the Virgin of Macarena. She is enormously rich. Everyone makes her gifts of their most prized possessions. Her fortune is worth millions. How far would it go if divided up among the people of that section of Seville? Nowhere! But in being concentrated upon her, it belongs to everyone. Each person, no matter how little he himself owns, has the illusion of being rich."



On the surface it would seem more sensible to put such wealth into clinics that would benefit the parish, but surface appraisals of any of the practices of the Spaniards are likely to prove inept, and few solutions that are "sensible" answer the emotional needs of these people. Very probably in adorning their patron Virgins with Byzantine splendor the Spaniards are doing what is best for them; for the needs of the spirit can be stronger than those of the flesh, and pride in the glitter of gold and jewels, particularly when brought out for all to behold, is a cherished escape from lives otherwise bleak.

So intense the pride, so savage the jealousies, that during Holy Week in Seville as the candle-emblazoned floats pass by, mobs actually shout unprintable insults at those carrying the patron Virgins of rival *barrios*.

"In Spain we need a very strong religion," a lawyer in Barcelona told me. "The ignorant masses are explosive. If the Church seems too dogmatic, and appears to exercise the discipline of a penal institution, it may be a necessary evil, for religion gives a moral sense the people would otherwise lack, and in effect serves as a check. From time to time this is resisted. It is true that the Church gives some the impression that it is always either persecuting, or being persecuted." He smiled wryly. "In Spain we have only extremes."

He added: "And we can have one religion only. If we Spaniards were permitted a choice, we would be fighting all the time."

"The Spaniard is very simple," a cultivated gentleman of Seville

said, adding, "in a complicated way. He may dislike his parents and detest the priest, but his duties toward both are clearly defined. Qualifications and exceptions only confuse him. It is better for us to have a religion that prescribes, rather than suggests."

From some aspects, at least, it would seem that Spanish Catholicism is the best answer to the Spaniards' own spiritual and temperamental requirements. For a foreigner to criticize the practices of the Church in Spain would be like condemning a native in the tropics for living in a bamboo hut because we ourselves need another type of dwelling for a temperate climate.

But many Spaniards are themselves quick enough to criticize.

The *curas*—the priests—are a primary target. The tales, particularly by former Republicans and Anarchists, would make Rabelaisian reading, but they are so much of a pattern as to be suspect for their similarity. One more moderate critic said: "It is the priests in the luxury centers and those parts of Spain where life is kinder who tend to be corrupt. In the hard country and among the mountains one finds splendid types."

But it is with the Church itself that many Spaniards take issue. As a nontheologian and only a passing observer of the Spanish scene, strongly disinclined to make pious appraisal of conditions that are none of my concern, I can only record, for what they may be worth, the more common complaints from the more intelligent sources, all of them men and women who consider themselves good Catholics, and the answers to them by equally good Catholics.

"The Church in Spain lacks a sense of changing times and politics. It sometimes pushes people into acts of violence, such as in 1931 during the Republic when the people burned the churches in Málaga, Madrid, and other cities in reaction to the proclamation of Cardinal Segura against the Republic."

"The Church is more solicitous about the welfare of the wealthy than that of the poor. It does not do right by the lower classes. It capitalizes upon their ignorance, permitting them to believe things that are not so, in order to strengthen its hold on them. It gratifies primitive superstitions under the cloak of Christianity."

And from a sophisticated Spaniard: "Soap and education would destroy the Church."

"The Church is quick to censure without first trying to understand. It makes little attempt to understand the conditions of poverty and misery that may have produced a censorable act."

"The Church does little—where it might do a great deal—to help the class that needs help most—the *gente baja*, the ignorant masses. The workingman finds no solace in the pronouncements of the priest; there is little relationship between the hardships of his life and the dogma of the Church."

One Spaniard told me, "It is among this class that the greatest anti-religious sentiment exists. In uprisings against the Church it is always the *gente baja* who take the lead and are the most ferocious."

"Why do you think that in Spain the people rise up periodically and burn the churches and shoot the priests?" an author working for the government asked me. "Because the Church encroaches on every aspect of our lives until we have a sense of suffocation and must break free."

If this is true, then the lesson is never learned. The Church is on hand today as rarely before in its history. Any group of high-school girls out on the beach or in the parks will have a nun or two along. A batch of young men taking off on a Sunday excursion is likely to include a priest. Each school has its *Director Espiritual*—the priest.

"I am a good Catholic," a Portuguese in Madrid said, "but it does seem to me that the Church in Spain has too much control over education—"

Students continuing to secondary schools have a choice of state *institutos* or private schools largely operated by the Church. Examinations in Church schools were made easier to attract pupils; outside supervision of examinations was resisted. But in 1952 the State in a surprise move decreed that pupils in Catholic schools should be examined by State teachers. To everyone's further surprise General Franco—himself a devout Catholic—informed the Catholic Commission that if the decree were not enforced, they would have to revert to the educational system of the Republic, which limited Church control of schools.

The lawyer in Barcelona told me: "Around 40 per cent of the education in Spain is provided by the Church. It's a choice of that, or nothing. I don't know which is worse—a preponderance of Church influence on education, or no education. All I know is that the main problem of Spain is that the people somehow be educated, with religion or without it."

It was interesting to get the reaction of other responsible Spanish Catholics to some of these views. All readily admitted shortcomings in the Church. These, I was told, could be explained.

Since the first expropriation of Church properties in 1842 the Church has had to operate on a greatly reduced budget. Today it actually owns very little property. Treasures such as those at Guadalupe are in the nature of museum collections; they do not constitute negotiable assets. The lack of funds has inevitably resulted in many deficiencies.

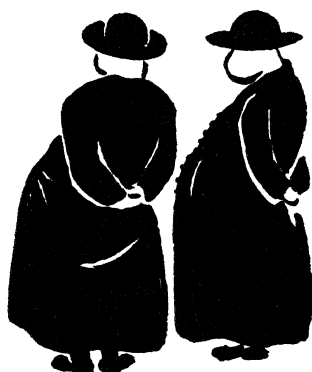
During the Civil War some three thousand priests were murdered, a debilitating blow to the ranks of the clergy. "There has been no time," one Catholic Action official told me, "to grow a new generation of philosophers needed to inspire the course of the Church."

There is within the clergy a group of younger ecclesiastics determined to make necessary reforms and bring the Catholic Church in Spain up to date. While some medievalist prelates such as Cardinal Segura, who blighted Seville for so long, would like to pull the country back under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, fortunately there are others such as Bishop Angel Herrera of Málaga whose *Instituto León XIII* is a center of Liberal Catholic activity, with its main objective to attract the neglected working class.

"The Church has become a target for a lot of criticism," the Catholic Action official added, "for a very simple reason. It is easier to criticize the Church than the State. People who cannot talk against Franco or the Falange can take out their bitterness on the Church."

"Faulty as the Catholic Church in Spain may be," another Spaniard said, "it is the only cohesive force that has kept this country of chronic dissidents from falling apart, many times over—largely because of the very qualities about it that are most condemned. Without the Church it is quite possible that there would be no Spain today."

The Church has long served as a binder with the Spanish people—ever since the body of St. James the Apostle auspiciously (and somewhat mysteriously) turned up in the ninth century in Galicia, just at the time when the northern Christians, dispirited and disorganized, badly needed a battle cry to fire them with the necessary zeal to throw back the Moors. It worked: well-entrenched Mohammedans, despite their superior civilization, gave way to semibarbaric Christians with their greater fervor. After the Moors were finally defeated in 1492, the Catholic Kings used the Inquisition as a semipolitical measure to forge a tight-knit nation of but a single mind. Today Catholicism is the major force that holds the country together, aided and abetted, of course, by Franco's army and police.



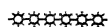
The person in position most to appreciate the country's religious fervor is General Franco. It's a lucky dictator who has the support of a force that is of the very fabric of the nation. Of the three props on which his regime rests—the Falange Movement, the Army, and the Church, the Church is by far the most pervasive—and also the most independent.

Aside from the extensive clerical organization with its finger-on-the-pulse information service, invaluable to the regime, there is the vast power of its lay affiliate, Catholic Action—350,000 men and women, young as well as mature, representing almost the entire wealth and education of the country, organized down to parochial

level with an efficiency feared and resented by its arch rival, the Falange. Representing a refreshing liberalism in the Church, *Ecclesia*, its mouthpiece, advocates needed reforms, frequently takes pot shots at the Falange, and has even come out with criticism of Franco, with only an occasional token rebuff from the Caudillo.

Today the Church in Spain is enjoying a wave of power unprecedented in centuries. Traditionalists in Spain see in the resurgence of Church influence a possible return to the greatness Spain enjoyed in its past periods of strength.

One thing is certain: despite criticisms of it, the position of the Church in Spain is secure—as long as Franco is on hand to keep its enemies from its throat.



“When discrepancies, inconsistencies, and contradictions cease to exist in Spain,” a prominent lawyer in Madrid told me, “Spain will cease to be Spain.”

One of the most glaring discrepancies is that between the living conditions of the masses of people, and those of what are commonly termed “the privileged few.”

What shocks so many visitors is that any human being should be living in a cave like a troglodyte. In Spain whole villages, like much-photographed Purullena near Guadix, are made entirely of caves with chimneys grotesquely projecting from mounds, and entrances in cliffs outlined with paint, like a minstrel’s mouth, white or chalk-blue.

But not all caves reflect a grub-level existence. Many of the gypsy caves pockmarking the hillside of Granada’s Sacremonte are handsomely furnished. At the State Tourist Inn at Puerta Lumbreras, where one emerges suddenly from the Death Valley landscape of central Murcia to the fertile fields beside the Rio Segura, I asked a maid, a girl from another section of the country, what the many cave houses on the edge of town were like inside.

“Like any other house,” she said. “That is, the nicer ones. Except that there is no light from windows. In hot weather they are very cool.”

I had also seen many primitive huts made of grass, and, curious as always, I said to the bellhop at the hotel in Ronda: "Today I drove past houses in the country with earthen floors and grass roofs. Now what might the people in these houses eat at the noonday meal?"

"*Cocido*," he said promptly, naming the collection of various meats and vegetables boiled in its own soup (*caldo*) that is a family dish in many parts of Spain.

"And what would they have in the evening?"

"*Caldo*."

There are many, of course, who do not eat *cocido*. The poverty, all-pervasive, cannot be denied. A heart-rending reading can be taken from the items displayed for sale on the sidewalks fringing the Rastro, Madrid's flea market: a broken comb; tin pans pocked with holes; a pile of wispy rags; hopelessly worn shoes; a moth-eaten fur pelt; a handful of rusty hairpins.

One reason the city is so clean is that nothing is thrown away.

Large areas in Spain would seem to defy man to draw any life from the soil, but the worst land by far that I saw was the stretch between Baza and Puerta Lumbreras on the drive from Granada to Alicante. The hills are as lifeless as the mounds of factory waste that they resemble. The second time I drove through, in June, here and there in the ash-gray shale a thin veil of green indicated a ghostly stand of wheat. It is small wonder that Murcians are driven to other sections of Spain, eager to undertake any work for next to nothing. Thirty pesetas a day (seventy-five cents) in Catalonia is wealth compared to eight or ten in Murcia.

In Catalonia Murcians are especially welcome: the Catalans, each of whom aspires to being a property owner and having *negocios*, are delighted for "*los koreanos*," as they call the Murcians, to do road work and other coolie tasks which they themselves despise.

"I do not see how those *koreanos* live," said an elderly man sitting beside the fire in the modest inn at Tossa del Mar where I spent a night. Pipe in hand, cap still on his head, he might himself have been a laborer, artisan, or—more likely—fisherman. "I have seen what they have for lunch when they stop work by the roadside: a tomato and some leaves of lettuce, without salt, and a piece of bread. At night per-

haps they chew on a piece of uncooked bacon. They are animals."

A number of the more energetic (and more desperate) Andalusians also find their way to "America," as the Catalanian land of plenty is called; but the Catalans have a low opinion of them as laborers. "*Muy torero y muy bebedor*," my fireside companion at Tossa described them: "All bullfighter and drinker."

The Andaluz is long used to dulling his appetite by cheap wine. The indolence of which he is accused may in part be the result of centuries of such a diet, plus life without hope, in an enervating climate. Decadence can be the product of misery as well as opulence.

"How is it there seems to be work for the women in Andalusia, while the men sit all day in the bars?" I asked a friend, himself an Andalusian.

"Women will do the work of men for half the pay. Therefore, jobs are more available to them."

And yet, except around tourist centers such as Santiago de Compostela and Granada, and discounting the children who come holding out their grubby hands for "*un caramelo*" or a peseta, there are few beggars. Begging, theoretically, is against the law. Charitable homes and clinics for the needy are provided by the State from the enormous proceeds of the national lottery. How well run they are, I don't know; the various reports that I received were so colored by political partisanship, for or against, that they were without value.

The Feminine Section of the Falange Movement carries on an extensive welfare program, and well-to-do men and women of the highly organized Catholic Action also do what they can for the destitute. Each, of course, deprecates the work of the other. "Yes, the *Sección Feminina* does much good," a titled guest at lunch told me, "but they do only what they have to and no more, and there is no heart in it."

"Yes, the *duquesas* and *marquesas* go out and visit the poor with baskets of delicacies and their purses full of pesetas," one of my *Sección Feminina* friends said, "—when it does not interfere with their social engagements. Possibly it relieves them of the guilt of wealth which they have not earned by their own efforts. They enjoy playing Lady Bountiful."

I knew that upon my return home I would be asked about "the dreadful poverty of Spain" and so I found myself bringing up the subject, sometimes with shocking lack of tact.

"Actually," one well-known intellectual said as we sat in his book-lined study, "eighteen million of a total population of twenty-eight million Spaniards live well."

"Yes, we have very terrible poverty," the Spanish representative for a large American concern said. "But take a province like Almería, always a particularly poor section, and check the sale of bicycles. It has been going up steadily. A bicycle is an expensive item for a Spanish laborer."

"It is true that we still have much suffering," the mayor of a north-coast seaport told me. "But you do not realize the progress we have made. Only a few years ago there was still actual starvation. Now the problem no longer is feeding the people, but housing them."

The first man referred to the productive, densely populated Levante coast up from Alicante—the carts going to and from the markets constituted the only "traffic" I encountered in the whole of Spain—and to Catalonia and the northern strip. "To live well" is, in Spain, a very relative condition; it could mean "not to be hungry."

And the purchase of a bicycle, while only a dream a few years back, is another step into the debt which dogs the Spanish laborer right to the grave.

Today work for everybody exists, at one time of the year or another. The "only" unemployment problem, I learned, is in the seasonal layoffs where whole areas are given over to the production of a single crop, such as on the huge holdings in Andalusia where the economy is similar to that of our pre-Civil War South. The entire province of Jaén is virtually one endless olive grove. At Morón de la Frontera, a prettily situated town deep in the Andalusian countryside destined to swarm with American airmen, I picked up a couple of youths to set me on an alternate road back to Seville.

"We have looked for work throughout this region," one of the boys said morosely. "There is much talk of working for the Americans when they start to build the airbase. But now there is nothing."

I asked the Spaniard with me what these boys were living on mean-

while. "Each family raises a little something from the ground. They have food. It's money for other necessities that they lack."

The pay is at the barest subsistence level. Factory workers' salaries, too, are low, kept at a minimum—I was told—so that industries would have more capital to invest. Nor do the extra benefits that the worker receives under the highly progressive Spanish labor laws compensate for the steadily rising cost of living. Prices are ten times higher than in 1936, while wages, so I was informed, have only gone up three times.

The "lazy" Spaniard is always there—in Andalusia, in bureaucratic levels, among the well-heeled aristocracy, and wherever an individual is not driven by immediate necessity to work; but he is outnumbered many times over by Spaniards half-killing themselves in the struggle to survive. Again and again I was appalled by how hard so many Spaniards do work.

Late one afternoon at a village on the Levante coast I parked my car by the beach to watch the fishing boats check in. A boy standing nearby nodded to me then wandered over. We started talking. From him I learned something of the life of the village.

"The men who sell fish from those trucks have a hard existence," he said. "Tonight they will be up until one in the morning, sorting the fish now being brought in. Then they must be up at four to start driving to Alicante and Valencia and other towns. All day they are selling fish. Tomorrow evening they will return here to wait for the boats. There is not much time for sleep."

"We are a most hard-working people," a fish-broker in Vigo told me. "In few other countries do men work as hard—for as little. Here a man will carry a load weighing one hundred kilos [220 pounds]. The hernia casualty is high. In most other countries laborers do not carry loads heavier than twenty-five kilos [55 pounds]."

There may no longer be actual starvation in Spain, but there are still a lot of hungry people.

Following a road above Toledo one afternoon, I was overtaken by a woman striding along, large bag in hand. We greeted each other and she fell in beside me. She was going to the army camp three and a half miles or more from town, she said, to get food from a friend

there. "My husband earns fourteen pesetas a day. How can one eat on that?"

Fourteen pesetas is thirty-five cents. I repeated this to a Spaniard in the house where I was staying. "She was telling you a story," he said. "You must watch that—all Spaniards like to add a little to the truth. The basic daily wage in Spain today by law is twenty pesetas." Fifty cents.

The next morning I asked the maid: "Is it possible for a person to make only fourteen pesetas a day?"

"*Hombre!* Is it! My father makes twelve. He works for the city government, watering down the streets."

The newspaper in Seville carried an advertisement for a cook at 250 pesetas a month (\$6.25). I commented upon that to a Spaniard: "It seems a little low, even for the provinces."

He said, "You must not judge too hastily. It is indeed very little—but that cook will live on the premises, get all her food, and in effect the salary amounts to several times her actual wage."

"We will always have servants," a Spanish friend with whom I was discussing the possibility of a future servant shortage said. "Ignorant, untrained, very bad ones, fresh from the country. There is an unlimited supply. As fast as those in the towns turn to factories or are lured away from us by wages Spaniards cannot afford to pay, others from the country are glad to take their places. They cannot live off what we pay them, but they know that at least they will be able to eat."

The standard of living *is* going up. Yesterday a laborer walked to his fields, or if fortunate rode a burro. Today, if fortunate, he peddles a bicycle. Tomorrow he may pledge his entire life earnings for a motor scooter. And then, perhaps, he will begin to dream of driving a car.

"In the dusty little store windows in the poorest of towns you can see the change," an Englishman who makes regular trips to Spain told me. "A few years ago they were almost empty or displayed only the cheapest necessities. Now the contents are getting fancier."

I write about the very great poverty in Spain not to appeal to over-responsive sympathies—I do not believe the Spaniard feels sorry for himself or wants pity—but again to call attention to certain admirable

qualities about these most rugged and resilient of people.

It is all too easy, if one prefers not to be disturbed by the poverty of Spain, to romanticize it: "Look how healthy, how browned by the sun the barefoot boys are!" And there is obviously truth to the statement that the underfed Spaniard is a hardier, tougher product than our own overfed people: "The Spanish peasant may have nothing else, but he has his hair, his eyesight, and his teeth." The point that merits our greatest admiration is that in the face of unrelenting adversity the underprivileged peasant and laborer can be so philosophical about it—ignorant but wise, cynical but witty, doggedly cheerful despite cruel setbacks.

A landowner told me that his entire wheat crop one year was destroyed by a hailstorm the night before it was to be reaped. The place was packed with peasants brought in from far around to do the job. "Frankly, we were worried," he said. "Hundreds of rough men, armed with scythes, suddenly denied the means of earning the pay they had counted on, made an ugly picture. But they understood and took it good-naturedly and quietly went their way."

There is no doubt that the rich in Spain have exploited the poor, a practice not limited to this country. Spanish landlords and factory owners are no more eager than their counterparts elsewhere to alleviate the conditions for those working for them, until forced to do so by laws.

Today the labor laws in Spain strongly favor the working class. An employer cannot fire a laborer unless for very good reason that must be substantiated by a labor court; the man if fired must be paid an enormous compensation that virtually means his support for life. An employee cannot be retired but can continue demanding working wages long past his period of usefulness. To his basic wage are added various compensations, from monthly allowances for dependents to a "high cost of living" allowance.

(Recent reports indicate that these one-sided labor laws may be considerably modified.)

How much actual benefit workers derive commensurate with the considerable funds sunk in social security programs, it is difficult to

know without probing behind the official reports. Certainly the construction of the many new sanitariums is impressive enough. On one short drive out of La Coruña we passed the following State institutions: a three-hundred-bed sanitarium for workers; a sanitarium for tuberculosis of the bones serving all Spain; an annual vacation resort for female workers; one for male workers; and a final building whose purpose I can't read from notes made in a jolting car.

No matter what is done, it is never considered enough, nor in the eyes of the chronically critical Spaniard is it properly done—and if by the government, it is most certainly done “with waste and graft.” Returning to Madrid after a day's excursion in a car borrowed from the State Tourist Bureau, I commented to the driver on the block of strikingly modern apartment buildings we passed in the suburbs. They were, he said, government-built workers' apartments, renting for 300 pesetas (\$7.50) a month.

“But that's very—” I caught myself before I said it, “cheap.”

“Yes, it is very expensive. And the tenants must pay carfare into town and back, and pay for a midday meal in a restaurant.”

One hardship that merits the greatest sympathy is hidden. This poverty in Spain is not the kind that wears rags and comes out begging, or would ever attract the attention of a tourist. It is in the privation of those who must manage on a small salary or pension, while the cost of living goes steadily up.

Widows of army officers, orphans of important officials, retired government employees: on three to four hundred pesetas a month (ten dollars or less) they must somehow maintain the outward standard of appearance expected of all above the working class. How? On starvation rations, in empty and heatless apartments, putting every possible centavo into warding off out-and-out shabbiness in a single good suit or dress. Clerks, schoolteachers, struggling young lawyers and doctors, army officers, newspapermen—these, also, mysteriously manage on salaries that to us seem shockingly low.

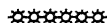
Spain does have a middle class, although smaller than elsewhere in Western Europe; and with current inflation it is, as elsewhere, getting it in its white-collared neck.

The government in mapping out work for all has spread jobs very

thin. Since one job often does not pay a subsistence wage, many Spaniards hold two—I found familiar faces often turning up where least expected. A captain in the Army in the morning will be a language teacher at the Berlitz School in the afternoon. A high naval officer will also sell electronics equipment—to the Navy. At the end of a day when an American would be closing shop, many Spaniards head for another full day's work.

For those on the inside track or just plain lucky, there are breaks. Top members of the diplomatic service receive in addition to their base pay a handsome bonus from the divided proceeds of one of the stamp taxes. An employee who has a take-home salary of twenty-five hundred pesetas a month from an official salary of three thousand may, if the company likes him, be given an extra three thousand monthly just to keep him happy. The gift system at the end of the year is also a useful device for getting around the frozen wage scales. It is all very flexible—for those in a position to manipulate it.

And it is all part of a system that in Spain has been in operation a long, long time. . . .



"Each step of progress made in Spain is an individual miracle."

My companion, an exporter in Barcelona, smiled wistfully. Curious, I waited for this intelligent Spaniard to define the ills of his country.

"We have a special genius, all our own, for needlessly handicapping ourselves. Whatever is accomplished is done the hard way. Most of the troubles from which the nation suffers today can be explained, if one examines them, by some incredibly stupid blunder on our own part."

He continued: "For instance, Spain now needs the talents and energies of its youth as never before. But our whole way of life is designed to kill initiative. A young man with ambition does not have a chance—unless born under the right auspices."

Here is a nation held tight in the grip of the status quo. At its inception five centuries back the "System" was established. The System meant that those into whose laps fell the rewards of conquest, kept

them; those who found themselves empty-handed remained so. The centuries have changed little.

Thus designed for the advantage of those who already have, the System successfully smothers the hopes and dreams of any who might aspire to what they have not. To strive to break through, to reach for something a little better, must give an ambitious young man the sensation of trying to run in deep sand. Everything possible conspires to hold him back. In Spain today it is very hard to beat the System.

Business, for example, offers little hope of advancement to an energetic employee. He is denied the opportunity to learn the job above him, for each petty executive jealously guards the authority of his position; responsibility is never delegated.

"It took me two years," the representative of a large American company said, "to convince my office manager that he did not have to come running to me every time he had to order a ream of paper."

An American Army Engineer officer working with a detail of GI's sinking a well outside Rota, site for one of the military bases, said that the Spaniards who came out to watch were amazed by the teamwork. "It surprised them that each soldier doesn't have to have someone standing over him, telling him which screwdriver to pick up." In Spain there is little teamwork; the man who tells the others which screwdriver to pick up hangs on tightly to this privilege. Or, even should a young man merit advancement by proven ability, it is likely that the boss has all the top jobs sewn up for his family and friends.

One wonders what incentive drives young men to go into the professions. A guide in Seville talked to me morosely about friends of his studying medicine. "When at last you have your degree, what have you got? One hundred and forty-eight graduates are now taking examinations to fill three places on the hospital staff. And if one should get the position, the salary is not enough to live on."

At the bottom of the parklike chasm below the Monasterio de Piedra, off the Zaragoza-Madrid highway in Aragon, I was strolling beside the lake one afternoon with the schoolteacher from the nearby village of Nuévalos. A man in a dark suit and carrying a black bag walked briskly past us, evidently headed for a farm hut down the valley. "Who is he?" I asked.

"That is the doctor from Nuévalos. He must be going to see a patient in that farmhouse."

The man had come two miles on foot, uphill, from Nuévalos to the monastery, I learned, then descended the precipitous paths that for twenty minutes take one steeply downward from level to level past gushing waterfalls: a course he would presently have to retrace. For his services in the peasant hut he would be paid what wretched compensation in produce or a few pesetas?

How much chance does a young man from the *gente baja* have for breaking through to something better? Not much; the System in every way works against him.

"It is very difficult," a maid at one of the tourist *paradors* said. "In my own family my younger brother, a boy of fourteen, works in the house of a duke. *La señora duquesa* uses him to run errands for her in town and do odd work about the place as it is needed. He is very bright and they like him. Recently he asked permission to leave their employment to find work in town, where in his spare time he could follow some studies in order to better himself. *El señor duque* told him that if he left he would not permit my mother and father, who live on the estate, to remain there, nor would he continue to employ my older brother who waits on the table. Of course my brother has to stay."

There is one golden road that can carry a boy swiftly from the very bottom of the pile—from filth and hunger and rags—to the glittering top: as *matador de toros* in the bullring. But how pitifully few make it.

The best way to reach the top, of course, is to be born there.

Every once in a while as I drove through the Spanish countryside I would stop to ask: "And who owns that valley?" Or that olive grove, or that castle. The answer would have the ring of Puss in Boots' rote: "Why, this is the property of the Marquis of Carabas!"

With the exception of those tracts appropriated by the government and municipalities, virtually all the land that was reconquered from the Moors is still held by those families to whom it was given as prizes of war by Ferdinand and Isabella and the Christian kings before them. Landowners who have since chosen to dispose of excess prop-

erty have, as would be only natural, held onto the choice lots.

In the more peaceful sixteenth century the nobles withdrew from their dark, dank castles to the greater comfort of "palaces" built in the towns. Almost every town boasts one or more hoary building distinguished by the fancy *escudo* on its front as a *casa señorial*. In the eighteenth century those who could afford it built ornate Renaissance palaces on the more beautiful or fashionable sites, and in Madrid.



Late on a spring afternoon, following byways on the heights above Granada, I came upon one of these palaces, shuttered and silent in its beautiful gardens, a fit setting for some Sleeping Beauty awaiting an intrusion other than mine. It belonged, the gardener's daughter informed me, to the Dukes of Infantado. "It used to be that they came every June and filled the house with guests. It would be fiesta in the gardens all the time. Now no one comes. *El señor duque* lives in Madrid. His sister, to whom this palace belongs, is a nun. It is a little sad here."

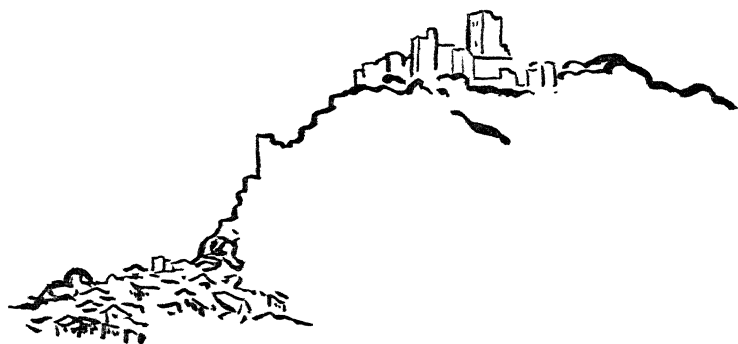
Over a courtyard portal was a tile plaque commemorating the glorious part the then Duke of Infantado had taken in the conquest of the New World.

Infantado, Alba, Medinaceli, Medina Sidonia—the history of Spain's great families is the history of two hemispheres. The first family is that of Medinaceli, so powerful that whenever a king is crowned it

is part of the ceremony for the Duke of Medinaceli to step forward and object, claiming an equal right to the throne. The name best known outside of Spain is that of Alba; the Third Duke of Alba by his administration of the Low Countries did as much as anything to form the popular concept of the "cruel, arrogant Spanish grandee"—a concept which his descendent, the late Seventeenth Duke, a grandee in the fullest sense, has completely refuted by the exceptionally generous treatment of the thousands of tenants dependent upon his lands for livelihood.

How grand is a grandee? In the case of the Dukes of Alba very grand indeed. Alba properties are scattered from one end of Spain to another. When asked how many castles he owned, the late Duke of Alba answered that he thought maybe six or seven. It was found that there were more than thirty. The present young Duchess, his only child, will upon her death bequeath a heavy load of titles to her son: he will be five times a duke, thirteen times a marquis, sixteen times a count, once a viscount, and a Grandee of Spain—*grandeza* being an inheritable, highly special degree of nobility bequeathed by the king—many times over. I was curious to know what education this boy would receive to fit him for life in these hazardous times of change.

"His education will be that received, in accordance with tradition, by his ancestors," his mother replied. "It includes studies in Spain continued in English schools, and travel abroad to gain experience in world affairs. As to his higher education, that is to be decided by himself." Members of the House of Alba, she informed me, have al-



ways devoted themselves to "the defense of the throne and of the legitimate succession. To this end they were always ready to serve the kings of Spain in their capacity as holders of high office."

She might have been talking of some ducal heir of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, not a youth destined to be launched into the uncertainties of the Atomic Age. And yet how else could she have answered?

If time has ever stood still, it has been with the Spanish aristocracy. In Spain there has never been a periodic plowing under of the ruling class by revolutions or economic depressions as has occurred elsewhere in Europe, or wholesale slaughter of the nobility in battle such as occurred to the French at Crécy and Agincourt; nor—until the past year or so—has a class of *nouveau riche* risen to infuse new blood. The body of the Spanish nobility is probably the most inbred in Europe—and the "purest." Titled young bloods may play around in Paris, and marry a girl of mixed Mediterranean or Caribbean stock if decorous, Catholic, and (mandatory) well-dowered, but—unlike in France, England, and Italy—there is small chance for a chorus girl, model, or manicurist becoming a duchess.

The Civil War dealt a blow from which the nobility reeled (the Duke of Veragua was among those caught in the Republican zone and assassinated), then sprang back with renewed verve to crowding in as much pleasure as dwindling incomes permitted.

The aristocracy's present most deadly enemy is the Falange Party. The dislike is mutual. Falangists realize that the return of the Monarchy would mean the axe for them.

"What good do these elegant parasites do the country?" one of my Falange friends said. "Their palaces are museums full of priceless art treasures—enjoyed exclusively by themselves. But do you ever hear of a wealthy duke or marquis serving as patron of the arts, or in any way encouraging new talent, as was once the tradition with nobility?"

Today not even the rich can afford to overlook any means of income; and Franco's policy is strongly against absentee landlords who do not cultivate their property. This policy also works against those who keep large tracts of their estates as hunting preserves or for breeding fighting bulls; today the land so used, I was told, is worth-

less for cultivation—poor or rocky soil, or wild mountain slopes. In some if not all cases this may be true.

While probably no one in the world would like better than the Spanish aristocracy to hold back the clock, times *are* changing. When I was in Madrid, only five of the forty or fifty palaces were open. In barren Estremadura particularly there is a class of land-poor aristocracy; descendants of conquistadors sit on their rocky estates dreaming of past glories and heartily wishing their adventurous forebears had put the gold and jewels brought home into building up productive holdings, instead of squandering them on the amusements of the day or financing the artisans of France and Italy for handsome furnishings.

More and more are having to work for the first time in the five-century history of their families. One forward thinking duke while serving as ambassador in Central American countries sent his daughter to a hospital in St. Louis to study to be a laboratory technician, and his sons to secretarial school in Philadelphia—in case they should ever have to earn their own living. "The only aristocracy that does right by the people is that of Andalusia," a Falange official in Seville said. "They actually work the land themselves. At the hotel in Jerez late any afternoon you will see landowners dropping in for a sherry, still in their rough clothes with the dust of the fields on their boots."

At a *quinta* where I spent several weeks the operation of the estate was the full-time concern of the entire family, conferences with overseers always in progress; the agricultural experience of the son-in-law, a marquis from a gentleman-farmer family of Estremadura, was particularly valued. Twenty families live on the place, each receiving a house, wages, and a dole of food staples; in all, around fifty people make up the colony with a large number of outside laborers reporting every day and others called in as needed. "I am working from six in the morning until midnight every day," the owner told me, and I could see how he would be.

The "luxurious" living of the upper classes in Spain has some peculiar gaps, by our standards. Although owning ten thousand acres and a sixteenth-century house full of heirlooms on this property alone, this landowner, a duke, did not possess a car; while I was there he got

around in the pocket-sized tin vehicle of a French overseer. Driving back from town one day I passed his daughter, the *marquesa*, riding behind her husband on his motorscooter.



The wealth of Spain is, as it has always been, in the hands of a few, but these days it is likely to be a different few. The fancier palaces, surrounded by elaborate gardens and parks, continue to harbor ancestral armor, handsome portraits, priceless porcelains and tapestries; and with low-cost labor the expense of maintaining estates remains minimal. But those who own the gleaming new Cadillacs and Buicks are not the titled aristocracy but Catalan industrialists, constructors, real-estate dealers, and a whole rising tide of *straperlos* (sharp operators) riding the crest of the current economic expansion. Except for this tiny segment, the mass of the nation remains caught in the grip of the System.

"In Spain we have a two-class system," a lawyer in Madrid said dryly. "Those who don't have to follow the law. And those who do."

He continued: "The Anglo-Saxon attitude toward law is that it is meant to be respected. In Spain no law is ever respected. There is a

law prohibiting virtually everything. Only those that are actually enforced are considered law. Officials interpret the law as it suits. '*En España todo se puede arreglar*'—'In Spain there is a way of arranging everything.'"

Corruption is conducted with a refreshing lack of hypocrisy. Contraband is quite openly sold.

"Aren't you afraid you will be caught?" I asked a fisherman on the Costa Brava who admitted to participating in occasional smuggling activities.

"Only those without the price of a bribe have anything to fear."

"In Spain there is much liberty—of a very special sort," a German engineer in Bilbao told me. "If I am halted by the police for not having proper lights or for some other defection, I compliment the man on his efficiency and ask him to dine with me that night. Understanding perfectly, he regrets that he is not free to do so. 'Then please accept this and buy yourself and a friend a dinner, with cognac, as my guest.' He accepts, and smilingly waves me on my way."

It is assumed as a matter of course that a man will use his position to help himself and his friends. "One is reminded of the Chinese," an American army officer who had served in the Orient remarked. "Each person all along the line expects his cut. Perhaps here in Spain it is less in terms of a cash rake-off than of an expectation of some personal favor later."

There is nothing new about corruption and favoritism—they are age-old, world-wide practices—but now under the increased restrictions of the dictatorship they are being worked harder than ever.

"Spain," one Spaniard said dryly, "is a terrible dictatorship—tempered by corruption."

"There is no more corruption in Spain than in many other countries, possibly including our own," an American for many years resident of Barcelona held. "It is just different. There is the graft which you find among officials all over the world. Then—far more extensive—there are the personal favors which one does a friend, or a friend of a friend."

Right or wrong, it is the local system, and the only Spaniards who complain are those who for some reason have been left out in the cold.

"Spain is the land of the poor-rich," an exporter in Barcelona told me, speaking half in English, half in Spanish. "We have everything—and we have nothing. We are rich in minerals—but we lack the proper facilities to mine them efficiently. We have a vast supply of cheap labor—yet must import French and Italians to work uninterruptedly on the military bases in order not to withdraw Spaniards absolutely essential when the crops come in."

He added: "Spain is like a kaleidoscope of jigsaw pieces, each meant to fit the other but none in its place. You have the feeling that with a sharp jolt the picture might make sense."

Whatever else may be wrong with the picture, there is one glaring defect in the Spanish scene that leaps out at the visitor: *no water*.

One sees on all sides the seemingly hopeless struggle to attract, hold, and divert water.

"We not only need every effort that we ourselves can make to survive," a Spaniard in New York said, "but we must also rely heavily on the co-operation of God. A drought is national catastrophe." His mouth twisted in a one-sided smile. "We are the most completely and intensely Catholic nation in the world, yet when you travel through the country you feel that God has turned his face from Spain."

The Spaniards should not place the entire blame upon the Almighty for the tragic lack of water. Man himself sheared the land of the rain-drawing, moisture-holding forests which once blanketed parts of the peninsula.

In the Middle Ages vast areas were denuded to implement and finance wars with Europe; "It was easier and more profitable," one landowner today suffering the consequences said ruefully, "to sell a hectare of lumber than to grow a hectare of wheat." The series of civil wars that followed wreaked further devastation.

The Arabs did their share in turning large tracts of Spain into a desert. "Wherever these nomads with their flocks of sheep and goats have gone," a retired British army officer familiar with the Near East explained one evening at the *parador* in Granada, "they leave a land stripped of growth. The Arabs cultivated beautiful gardens and were masters of the art of irrigation, but they leveled the trees and their flocks clipped the grass right down to its roots."

A finishing touch was added when, immediately after the Civil War, too much marginal land was put into cultivation.

But the problem of water has always existed in parts of Spain. Driving along the southern coast, one can pick out attempts at irrigation which date back to the Romans, many still in use. The *Tribunal de las Aguas* in Valencia, which meets every week before the Cathedral to decide altercations over water, has been in existence since before the time of the Moors.

Today the level of water in the reservoirs and river basins after a rain makes headline news. To give nature a nudge, the present regime has undertaken a long-term program of reforestation—half a million hectares (1,235,000 acres) of land have been reforested since the Civil War; but no matter how much is done, the effort seems pitiable in the face of the problem that remains. "What good are thermal plants and reservoirs, dams and modernized irrigation—if there is no rain?" one Spaniard said sadly.

Water, or the lack of it, has direct bearing upon what by many is considered the country's chronic headache: a large agricultural population dependent for its livelihood on land that is not only subject to the vagaries of the elements but also, it is claimed, to those of its wealthy and "irresponsible" owners. Most of the largest land holdings are in Extremadura and Andalusia. Foreigners indignant over such enormous "feudal" estates overlook one pertinent fact: in these sections there is likely to be water only once in every hundred or so acres. To partition these lands is no more practicable than it would be to split up Colorado or Wyoming into small-farm lots.

Early during the Republic an Agrarian Land Reform was put into effect; privately owned estates were taken over by the government—not quite expropriation but still at less than market price. The program was revived by the Franco regime. Some landowners consider it a blow dealt beneath the belt. I heard of one case in Aragon where the owner had sunk all of his own and his wife's fortune into extensive improvements—tractors, irrigation, fertilizers. A bad season proved disastrous and he had to borrow heavily from his wife's sister. Just as he was beginning to get back on his feet, the State came along and partitioned the property.

"This *quinta* is actually run at a loss," the owner of olive groves outside Toledo told me. "It is financially carried by another farm we own beside the Tajo, which is very profitable. When the State was dividing up local properties, it was realized that it would not benefit anyone to own five olive trees. The place needs an over-all management. If we with our resources cannot run it at a profit, how would individual lot owners hope to make a go of it?"

And from an orange grower in Valencia: "Partitioning the estates does not necessarily benefit the recipients. Here, for example, the initial value of the land is nothing in relation to what one must put into it. It is only after one has invested in digging wells, making dams, and mapping irrigation that the land begins to be worth anything."

Another standard objection, however pat, doubtless has some validity: "Wherever the land is divided among the workers, an inevitable result follows: the sharpest of the new owners soon buys up the lots around his, whose owners go off to Badajoz or Seville with their money and get drunk. In miniature you have the beginning of the same condition as before."

"Actually," a Spaniard working for the U.S. Economic Aid Mission told me, "the problem of absentee ownership and large holdings is no more grave than that of *too* small farm lots. This condition exists from Madrid north. For centuries each father has divided up his land among his sons, so that now you have a man owning half a hectare [about an acre] here, another piece three kilometers away [almost two miles] and a third patch somewhere else. He couldn't use a tractor even if he were given one.

"The government is now discouraging this. A man is not allowed to divide up his property into smaller than minimum efficient units of cultivation. We are trying to get farmers to swap lands so that their property is concentrated. It is not easy. The Spanish peasant is very cautious about change. He feels a close bond with the soil his ancestors worked before him. But they are slowly coming around."

"It is not important *who* works the land," a wealthy young Andalusian surprised me by saying. "The landowner or the farmer. What is important is that the land be worked."

Today the "recolonization" program is one of the most successful of

the regime. Families are moved from overpopulated sections to areas requiring cultivation. Each is given a plot of land, his house, and some livestock, for which in time he pays—a cow, for instance, is paid for with the first calf. I drove past several of these colonies, the spanking new communities an anachronism in the dessicated Spanish landscape.

Spain's special malady is that, until now, everything has for centuries been taken from the land and nothing put back in. In the early seventeenth century the last of several hundred thousand Moriscos—Christianized Arabs, largely agricultural workers cultivating Castile, Aragon, and the provinces south—were driven out of Spain. The lands fell into disuse; erosion set in. Today the lifeless plains spotted with slumbering towns in the shadow of crumbling Moorish walls attest to the tragic results.

The riches from the New World did the country little good. Most of the wealth passed right on through it to the artisans of France and Italy, and the bankers of Europe who were financing Spain's wars with the House of Austria.

The definitions of Spain's major problems are as varied as the remedies prescribed for them. Some believe with Ortega y Gasset who wrote: "... The only way to prosperity for Spain is the country way." City government, this writer stated, is not suited to understand the problems of a primarily agricultural land.

On the other hand: "Spain must industrialize," a lawyer in Bilbao asserted emphatically. "Agriculture can never carry the country. Citrus fruits and olives are fine, but the cultivation of grain is too expensive. Industries are essential to balance and supplement the economy."

And in the opinion of another: "Our biggest need is for education. The government training farms set up to teach improved methods, and the industrial colleges where laborers both study and work at jobs, are big steps forward. The more Spaniards who travel, the better."

Today the United States promises with U.S. dollars, machinery, and technical aid to alleviate many of the nation's chronic problems—or at any rate to reshuffle them. "We are adjusted to the problems

we were born with," one Spaniard put it. "With progress, so-called, we will be faced with a lot of unfamiliar ones!" Many are wondering, for instance, if the advent of machinery will mean the advent of unemployment.

Experts say no. "Wherever you substitute modern machinery, employment, after an initial period of adjustment, rises," an engineer whom I had spotted as a fellow-countryman in the hotel dining room at Tarragona said. "It has worked that way elsewhere. Why not in Spain?"

Plans have been devised between the Spanish government and U.S. advisers for brightening the future of Spain, but: "You can't learn Spain's problems," someone said. "You must live them." Tremendous improvements can and will be effected on a top planning level with the outside assistance now available to the country, but for the individual Spaniard to effect any change whatever in his way of life, for him to take a single step from the deep groove in the economic and social pattern into which he was born, remains a formidable achievement.

Tradition, tight controls, lack of opportunity, ignorance, and his own "gypsy mentality" drag at every effort he may make. The result is the almost tangible blanket of lethargy which weighs upon the land.

Factories may roar in Bilbao and Barcelona, but throughout most of the country the pace is geared to inertia. It is easy to understand the Spaniard's disinterest in work, his frequently slapdash performance of it. No wonder time is without value; little in a person's life would be affected by its acceleration—or its complete halt.

"We are decadent," the exporter in Barcelona said. "Not in lack of strength and vitality, but in lack of will and direction."

The spell of the past is hard to break; invisible chains of habit and tradition anchor each person to the routine which he and his ancestors have always followed. The mother of the cook of friends of mine lives in a cave on the outskirts of Madrid. "Our cook has done everything she can to get her mother to move in with her," my friends said. "But the old woman won't do it. Although it has no heat, no light, and no water, the cave is her home."

"The Spaniard is intelligent and ingenious," the engineer in Tarragona told me. "Given a chance to study abroad, he would make a fine inventor. The trouble is, he's hampered by tradition. Unless he sees an immediate need for doing something in a new way, he'll automatically stick to the old method." He shook his head. "Left to



their own devices, they'd go straight back to the Romans."

The customs of centuries make it difficult to effect any improvement even when an effort is made. A Catalan with cousins in Andalusia told me, "The Republic did many good things, the results of which were often disastrous. It was decided to double the wretched wages of the Andalusian field workers from three pesetas [today less than ten cents] a week to six. Thereafter the Andalusians, accustomed to getting along on three pesetas, only worked half a week—and the landowners had to import laborers from Portugal."

The Spaniard is not always easy to help. Sometimes it is Spanish independence of spirit which thwarts do-good efforts. In the cheerless garret studio of a promising young painter several of us discussed the desirability of art colonies sponsored by the State to help just such persons as himself. "Not for me!" he exclaimed. "In such a colony, or accepting help from anyone at all, I would not feel free!"

And sometimes it is the instinctive reaction of suspicion and ingratitude on the part of a people too long unused to receiving any consideration. A Spaniard from a family of wealthy Andalusian landowners told me that the priest who talked to his group at the religious sessions attended by everyone during Lent advanced the admonition that privileged Spaniards such as themselves should be more concerned with the welfare of those less fortunate. "Take it upon yourselves to see that your tenants and laborers are better housed and fed," he said, "and are assisted through seasons of bad crops—"

"This did not go over too well with my group," the Spaniard told me. "Some of my cousins have tried in the past to do things for the laborers on their lands. They say, 'What's the use? The *campesinos* only turn against you.' They claim that it is in the nature of the *gente baja* to take advantage of any special consideration shown them, and to repay it with resentment that even more is not done."

Possibly the biggest handicap under which the Spaniard operates is his own personality: instinctively antagonistic, flash-in-the-pan, chronically opposed to concerted or sustained effort. Not only is nature aligned against man, but man is aligned against himself. Here is an entire nation made up of square pegs.

The independence of the Spaniard is, according to Madariaga, the essence of "the Spanish trouble." Every Spaniard is a potential dictator, and "within the sphere of his private and civil life an actual dictator so far as he is able."

Inability to organize and co-operate characterizes the full stormy length of the peninsula's history. Nor is constancy a Spanish virtue. "Loyalty" in Spain is likely to mean loyalty to oneself. The country's great national hero, the Cid, was alternately in the employ of the Moors and of the Christians.

"In Spain there have been great individuals but not great associations," an intelligent Spanish woman told me with a smile. "We Spaniards are not great administrators."

She added: "To be individualistic makes a person—and a nation—interesting, but difficult to co-operate with."

"The exercise of individual rights implies an educated population," the exporter in Barcelona said. "Liberty is the privilege permitted rich countries. Spain is no more ready now for democracy than it was in the sixteenth century for running an empire. If permitted truly democratic elections today, Spain would blow up. Before giving the people the vote, they must somehow be taught the responsibility that goes with this privilege. The only responsibility a Spaniard feels is toward himself."

I am among those who subscribe to what has been called a "fatuous platitude": that the Spaniards, at least at present, are by temperament incapable of any sort of representative government in which the individual has a voice. From all that I have observed and read, including what so many Spaniards themselves have told me, the Spanish people require autocratic leadership.

With all its very great evils, a dictatorship appears the only means of keeping the Spaniards from going at each other with the nearest weapons at hand. The most that one can hope for is that under an enlightened regime, the people will be gradually educated to the exercise of judgment over impulse.

But: "Today in Spain we have very tight discipline," the lawyer in Bilbao said. "And Spain's greatness may in truth depend upon discipline—in funneling its forces. Otherwise we are forever flying off

in all directions. But the present controls are not of the kind to channel the best energies toward the best results."

And the grip of the government compounds the frustrations.

To the anesthesia induced by a lack of all sense of urgency is added the smothering effect on individual effort of a bureaucracy expressly designed, it would seem, to thwart anyone who is without the prestige—or the pesetas—to make use of its authority.

The mayor of a small but important north-coast town, himself a Falangist, expressed it well: "Madrid is a magnet. Nothing in Spain can be accomplished without spending time and money in Madrid. The State is bogged down with bureaucracy. Every move one makes has to go through three or four departments, each taking time, each referring you to another. One's enthusiasm and energies become dissipated. You give up, first hope, then interest."

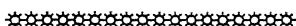
This, according to some Spaniards, is a minor evil. Infinitely more crushing to incentive than the numbing grip of the bureaucracy is the repressive policy of a government which apparently sees in all exercise of initiative and spontaneous effort a potential danger.

It is not enough that nature should have placed a curse upon this land and upon the temperament of those who are its product. Graver by far to many Spaniards than any question of rehabilitating the economy is another concern: how to preserve the hope and ambition of a people condemned by the violence of their own nature to the spiritual and intellectual degradation of a dictatorship.

PART

IV

BITTER MEDICINE



SOMEONE IN NEW YORK said before I sailed: "Find out what's going on intellectually inside Spain. Nobody knows. The chances are that all free thought, not to mention all creative expression, is withering under the Franco blight."

Spain is that curiosity peculiar to the twentieth century: a country with a captive mind. But here the control is directed less at thought than at *emotion*.

For going on twenty years the Spanish government has been conducting an interesting experiment. Through elimination of virtually all provocative stimuli, the present-day Spaniard—traditionally hot-blooded and rebellious—has been confined within a Puritan mold. The effect of the clinically sterilized atmosphere has had some surprising results.

The idea of censorship is anathema to free-thinking peoples. "But in condemning it in Spain," a cultured Spaniard told me, "you overlook the fact that it proved a necessary and effective expedient at a time when it was unquestionably needed—and would have been used no matter which side won the Civil War."

In 1939 a prostrate Spain closed its doors upon the world, turning in upon itself to seek the source of its own individuality and strength, reverting to much the same spirit of the time of Ferdinand and Isa-

bella when those monarchs sought to solidify the country by searching its own soul and casting out all dissenting factors.

The Franco government stopped short of methods quite as extreme as the Inquisition and expulsion of the Jews. It defined certain stanch props that would provide the strength of the new structure: the Family, the Church, and the State—and all emotions were channeled toward their support. Complete control was established in all fields of expression. Any distracting ideas from the outside world were blocked at the border. The lid was on and clamped down tight. Liberal theories such as those first brought in by the French in the late eighteenth century were particularly *non grata*.

Every word that goes into print is checked for its possible effect on the reader. Nothing is overlooked. Crime, when it is reported, is relegated to the briefest mention on a back page. Political censorship operates on the assumption that a phrase is suspect until proven innocuous. The rule is, when in doubt, cut.

One newspaper editor told me, "Censorship is very irritating. It is often stupid, but it is not vicious. It bothers everyone a lot. Our newspapers will do you no good at all."

And from an Englishman long resident in Spain: "But during the Republic the censorship was far stronger than today! I remember when newspapers came out with perfectly blank columns—"

Which is little consolation to those fretting under its harassment now. Mention the word "censorship" to an author or editor, and you hear a cry of anguish.

Most of the censorship is moral, exercised by the Church, with little hope that it will ease up.

All sex is vile and sinful, although to procreate divine.

"One can write about the life, including sex life, of insects, and be fairly safe," one writer said bitterly. Another prominent author prefaced his comments with the usual, "Of course I would not want to be quoted, but—" and then let fly: "The author is denied all the delightful exercises in irony, suggestion, amusing situations, stimulated by man-woman relationships. A priest's outlook on sex is unnatural to begin with. The average priest can't possibly prescribe to meet the reactions of normal people. And yet they pass on every word."

What is driving both authors and editors wild is the whimsy that apparently guides the censors. One priest will pass a daring passage where another will cut an innocuous one. There are no rules for an author to go by. "Like everything else in Spain," a woman active in Madrid's *vida cultural* said, "church censorship is illogical and inconsistent."

"Church censorship is admittedly stupid," a Spaniard told me. "You will find it much stronger in the country. It is mainly for the *gente baja*."

"The degree to which we cut all reference to physical violence and base instincts may seem ridiculous," the newspaper editor said to me. "And it is true that we do not have enough priests qualified to do the job intelligently. But—" and he looked at me pointedly—"in Spain today there is virtually no crime, moral degeneracy, juvenile delinquency, or psychoneurotic problems. You will note that such crimes as we have are crimes of passion, and not of depravity."

And he added: "Foreigners might think twice before judging the right and wrong of Spanish prescriptions for Spanish ills."

I think he has a point.

But captivity does not, in Spain, curtail activity. Madrid for my money is the most delightful city I have ever known largely because of the considerable zest in its *vida cultural*. Barcelona, center of the publishing business, capital of the Catalans among whom there is a concentration of artistic talent ("the best poets and thinkers are from Andalusia, the best artists and craftsmen from Catalonia"), first and only stop for such foreign opera and ballet companies as cross the border, is if anything even more active.

In Spain "culture" is not the property of the educated classes alone. In this land of large underprivileged masses I had some surprises coming to me.

My garage mechanic in Granada, a young man making probably sixty cents a day, has one abiding passion: classical music. All the money he can spare goes into buying records, he told me, which he, his sister, and a group of friends gather to enjoy.

At a filling station in a small town north of Valencia a rough-look-

ing youth in a turtle-neck sweater brought his motorscooter to a halt beside my car. "Do you enjoy traveling around Spain like this?" he asked curiously.

"Very much!" I added: "Life is a dream!"

He smiled, recognizing in my words—*la vida es sueño*—the title of the well-known work by Spain's great Golden Age dramatist, Calderón de la Barca, and murmured his name. I wondered how many of his prototypes around a filling station at home would respond to a similar classical reference.

Everywhere I went I discovered people of the lower classes who had received at least some education. "The rate of illiteracy is as variable, fluid, and unreliable as the rate of exchange," a Spaniard in the United States told me. "Statistics coined on Madison Avenue put it at 35 per cent. Statistics coined on the Puerta del Sol at 12 per cent. An Army colonel told me once that about 20 per cent of conscripts were illiterate. I'd say this is a pretty accurate estimate."

Today there are various campaigns on community levels to reduce illiteracy among adults. I heard of one village where the mayor decreed that only those who could read and write could attend the movies—moving pictures, particularly American ones, having become the national addiction.

Spain's legends and much of its literature, as well as its history, live in the daily existence of its people, in the oral tradition of many countries with low literacy—a cultural legacy which, many fear, may diminish with the increasing reliance on radios and moving pictures. Those who have the slightest opportunity to enrich their lives by reading, do so. The *Casa Americana* libraries, although unpublicized and often difficult to locate, are crowded, as are those maintained by the British Institute in the same major cities, and the public State libraries. There are more bookstores in Madrid, in proportion to the population, than in New York City.

Among *los intelectuales* I encountered a surprising familiarity with current American literature up through Eudora Welty and Tennessee Williams. Translations of banned books reach Spain from Argentina and are sold under the counter. At a private lecture in Madrid one evening forty to fifty men and women were gathered to hear a play-



wright discuss *Death of a Salesman* as it reflects the American scene; it seemed eerie to hear the name Willy Loman bandied familiarly in Spanish between audience and lecturer, all pronouncements on American mores being made, as usual, not from conjecture but from conviction.

On their part, Spaniards are bitter that our off-campus knowledge of their literature goes no farther than Cervantes and the poet Federico García Lorca—"and would Americans ever have heard of him," a magazine editor asked me, "if he had not been martyred as a Loyalist victim of the Civil War?"

Although newspaper reporters, forced by the State to jump through hoops, are regarded as a particularly low form of life, painters, novelists, playwrights, and poets receive, at least from the public, the special respect accorded purveyors of culture throughout Europe.

It's about all they do receive.

In Spain the normal hazards of the creative professions—already great enough, heaven knows—are increased a hundredfold by additional ones that would discourage any people of less determination and vitality.

The sole support of the creative arts is that Middle Class which is supposed to be lacking in Spain. Smaller than elsewhere in Europe, and on a much lower income painfully caught between inflation and the rising cost of living, it is nevertheless this class which provides such buyers of paintings, books, and theater tickets as exist.

The financial pinch makes itself manifest in the caliber of the theater and movies. As might be expected, actors are underpaid. "Of course Spanish movies are inferior," an American in the industry said. "They can't compete against American capital. They have to be subsidized by the State. The six-hundred-thousand-peseta duty on each American film is allocated to Spanish studios, and naturally the State decides which will receive how much. Result: the studios are not shooting for the public but for the political board."

He added: "Cut out sex, politics, crime, and virtually all other subjects implying conflict of any sort, and there's nothing much left for a script writer to work with."

It is strange to think that in this age a nation could be insulated against all provocative ideas, as is happening in Franco Spain.

"Poetry is doing all right, but the novel and all brainwork are behind," a knowledgeable Spaniard in the United States replied when I asked his opinion of the quality of today's artistic output. "There always has been and will be much natural talent in Spain. The current restrictions serve both to smother it, and to sharpen it."

He continued: "Cut off from foreign sources of inspiration and influence, artists and writers have had to go on their own, too often getting only nowhere, but occasionally into some striking, forceful, and entirely original creations." Among these are the Spanish architects and sculptors who have been carrying away the laurels at European expositions since 1951—daring young modernists whose education, I was told, has been limited to Spain.

Mental recession on a national scale is nothing new to this country.

"Free thought" was considered dangerous to national objectives in the sixteenth century by Philip II, who imposed complete political and religious censorship with the threat of death at the stake for heretical unorthodoxy in beliefs—and barred foreign universities to Spanish students. For years after Philip II's reign Spain remained cut off from currents of European thought.

My impression was that many painters and writers, even were they financially free to travel, would prefer to remain in the country. To emerge from the ivory tower might lead to objectivity, which for a Spaniard could be disastrous, for inspiration is drawn from inner fires well-stoked by self-confidence. Spaniards do not create from imagination and supposition; they work from fixed beliefs. "While a Frenchman tends to paint with much mentality and little heart, the Spaniard paints entirely from the heart and with intensity," I was told by an Argentine at an art exhibit in Madrid.

Such burning zeal is bound to produce results, even if these sometimes express more dynamics than discernment. Someone has said that Spanish art is "more Spanish than art." Certainly the strongest characteristics of a somber people show in the best work of the more modern Spaniards. Novels tend to deal with death and desperation. Zuloaga's mammoth portraits with their stormy, turgid colors are like a cry from a soul in torment.

"We have produced relatively few painters of international distinction compared to other countries of Europe," a Spaniard told me. "But those that Spain has produced rank among the greatest of all ages."

"Spain must be true to Spain" is an expression one is likely to hear often from Spaniards these days; it has, in fact, become a national policy.

"The Republic tried to refashion a country that was not yet ready to be refashioned," one Spaniard told me. "It suppressed dancing, handicrafts, and many picturesque local customs as 'backward.' To destroy such features that are the very substance of Spanish life is to lift from a body its heart or soul."

Preserving "true Spain" was the crusade of Franco's forces and all the conservative elements aligned with him. In the effort to re-establish

a national identity, traditionalism has been made the keynote. The highly successful efforts of the *Sección Feminina* to revive half-forgotten songs and dances of the provinces, and encourage women in their homes to take up regional crafts as a source of income, are only a few examples of the return to a self-conscious nationalism.



Franco's attitude toward the country whose character he would shape is that of a Spanish parent who knows what is best for his child. Recently he reiterated for the benefit of foreign news correspondents his firm belief in censorship. He can afford to be indifferent to the criticism such a stand would arouse in the outside world. The Iberian ivory tower is now further fortified by a ring of defensive armor, facing outward—compliments of the U.S.A.

Additional indication that all within the country is under complete control is the surprising leniency allowed intellectuals who were erstwhile Loyalists. I know two currently popular authors who fought on the Republican side ("were caught in the Republican zone" is the

way this is now expressed). One member of Madrid's *vida cultural* is surrounded by an aura of distinction for the sole reason that he was a close friend of the murdered poet, Lorca. Spaniards warm to former political opponents who now admit to their errors: one of today's most idolized intellectuals was once aligned in the ranks of the Liberals.

Although many Spaniards spoke freely to me, I did not happen to hear any talk of Liberalism or another try at a republic. "The Spanish people are exhausted from experiments in democracy," the exporter in Barcelona said when I questioned him on this subject. "They are skeptical about the chances of ever having a good government. Even Republicans don't honestly believe there is much hope for a successful Republic. I fear that those who want to try it again want it only so that they themselves can climb to power."

None of my Spanish informants whom I queried on the student riots at University of Madrid in February of 1956 (apparently a purely inter-Falange dispute) took them as a serious indication of restiveness under the regime, although one wrote: "It is undeniable that some dissatisfaction and unrest exist among student groups."

Most Spaniards, I believe, are resigned to an indefinite continuation of present conditions. Spanish Liberalism is not likely to go much farther these days than wistful dreaming of a Never-Never-Future in which there will be a relaxation of restrictions. "The time has passed for such tight controls," I was told bitterly by more than one of *los intelectuales*.

"If we are not permitted some freedom, how can we ever learn the exercise of democratic responsibilities?" a former diplomat wrote me.

"Any Spaniard of intelligence feels the humiliation to which the Spanish people are being subjected before the entire world," a playwright said angrily, his face flushing. "It is as though we were a nation of criminals and cretins."

There are probably many like this man who wonder how long it must be necessary to treat the entire population of a country like reform-school inmates. Thoughtful Spaniards recognize that continued intellectual inbreeding could have a debilitating effect on creative

effort; they hope for a day when Spain can have free interchange of ideas with the outside world.

The controls of the Franco dictatorship have at least one merit over those of the Soviet: instead of a gun in the small of the artist's back to see that he says what he should, there is a Damoclesian sword over his head ready to fall if he says what he shouldn't.

The accent is on negative response. In other totalitarian states born of the twentieth century the populace are fed fiery propaganda to imbue them with further nationalistic zeal—and distract them from the fact of their domination. In Spain the populace is fed nothing!

In Russia and its satellites the intellectuals as a group are extremely important, used by the State as a propaganda channel to reach the minds of the people. In Spain the effect of the intellectuals upon the life of the people is nil. An author to his own disgust may be forced as a means of livelihood to work for the Ministry of Information filling the pages of cheap publications designed for the working classes with material as innocuous as Pabulum. State-sponsored magazines such as *Teresa*, a smooth monthly put out for women by the Women's Section of the Falange Movement, carry an occasional "slanted" piece; but these efforts seem half-hearted.

It is the State's manifest contempt for the dignity of the intellect that most disturbs—and insults—thoughtful Spaniards who wonder about the future. Intelligence is suspect. Enthusiasm is suspect. Vitality is suspect. Even youth is suspect.

Other dictatorships place a premium upon the potentialities of youth; youth is recognized as an invaluable source of energy, a tool for fashioning the future. The talents of the young are fostered—and doctored. Ability, wherever spotted, is nourished with special education and privileges, so that in time the State benefits from the technicians, scientists, engineers, and even artists so carefully encouraged.

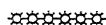
In Spain it is exactly the reverse. The vitality of youth is an explosive—and therefore potentially dangerous—force, to be watched and constantly held in check. Youth and education, a nation's greatest investments in the future, are rigidly controlled between the Church and the State. It is even prohibited to form the Boy Scouts. In spite of all the young men and women enrolled in the ranks of the Falange

youth organizations, an outsider senses in this country a lack of youthful zest, little expansive spirit. The regime does not want the support of enthusiasm and talent; it merely wishes docile acquiescence to its dicta.

It is an eerie sensation to realize that here is an entire nation deliberately put into a state of mental regression.

And yet, so peculiar is the current picture inside Spain, so highly charged the Spanish temperament, that to permit the people normal expression might prove disastrous. It is either murder of the mind—or, once more, of the masses.

Franco has a tiger by the tail.



“I don’t like to think about it. Just the thought of those years sickens me. Perhaps because I know that it could happen again.”

The Spaniard, an exporter in Barcelona to whom I had been given a letter of introduction, spoke softly, his gray eyes suddenly seeing far beyond the group of Americans settling themselves noisily in the chairs before us. In the opulent setting of the Ritz Hotel lounge it was not easy to imagine the debacle of the Civil War years, nor my well-groomed companion in the mussed field uniform of a Nationalist officer.

Two subjects are on the tip of the tongue of all American visitors with more than the most casual tourist interest in Spain: the Spanish Civil War and the Franco police state. Until I learned to relax about them, I was guilty on many occasions of lack of tact and even of taste (but never, I hope, of discretion) in bringing them up whenever possible. The first was an unholy mess in which everyone was involved and which everyone would like to forget—and can’t. The second as a subject is, as one Spaniard put it, “very delicate.”

The searing brand burnt into the land by three years of conflict is fading—a modern suburb of sky-scraping apartment buildings and a handsome new university town cover an area of Madrid leveled during the siege of that city—but it is far from wholly gone. Approaching Zaragoza (and Lérida, and Teruel, and other towns from Valencia

to the Ebro) one becomes conscious of something not quite as it should be: the dun-colored buildings erupting in a cluster from the treeless landscape seem cloaked in a hoariness apart from antiquity. It is as though some blight had struck these towns, blurring the outlines, eating away at angles, fraying façades, marring walls with an ugly scrofula.

Among the colorful new villas blossoming over the rolling plains to the fashionable northwest of Madrid still sprout the ghostly fragments of masonry, gaping husks grasping at the brilliant sky.

Europe is riddled with ruins, but those in Spain have a special poignancy: they stand as testament to the most savage of all civil wars in which a nation tried to claw itself apart.

By the time this is published it will be nearly two decades since the losers laid down their arms. Today in the new relaxation after the first ten years of cruel stringency the population gives the impression of being bent almost deliriously on pleasure. Cafés and *cines* are full. Parks and plazas and broad, sunny *ramblas* and *vías* are thronged. In the hottest months the seaside resorts are bursting at the seams with activity and noise.

One does not have to probe very deeply beneath this *alegría* to touch the bedrock of tragedy on which it rests. The very fact that the surface seems so free of rancor makes the reminders the more telling when one stumbles upon them.

And the tragedy is pervasive; it is around you, all the time, beneath the bright chatter in the Palace Bar, unseen in the smart gathering at a *couturier's* show, present in the prim salon of the hostess who serves you sherry and almonds.

Today it is considered a social error by many Spaniards to bring up the subject of the Civil War, but in every Spanish home its bitter memory is the guest who came to stay.

"Do they have any children?" I asked the woman beside me in the Hilton lounge, nodding toward an animated couple we both knew.

"They had. Two boys. The War broke out while they were visiting relatives in Cartagena, in the Red zone. They were taken with others to a ship in the harbor, weighted, and made to jump overboard."

Sitting across the desk from a well-known lawyer I noticed the

shadow that crossed his face as we spoke of the War—"children too young to remember it themselves still hear about it from their parents," he was saying. "It is with the generation only now being born that the memory will begin to fade."

His expression haunted me so, that later I asked a mutual acquaintance about him. "Did he have some particular experience?"

"No more particular than that of many families. His father and two brothers were murdered by the Reds in the purge of Madrid for fifth columnists after Mola's announcement. He himself happened to be out of the house when they came."

"Mola's announcement?"

"In October of 1936 General Mola, marching on Madrid, broadcast over the radio: 'You will see that I am arriving with only four columns. I am relying on a fifth column within the city.' This launched mass murder. People rushed from house to house, searching out suspected members of the 'fifth column.' Nine thousand men were taken out of prisons in Madrid during two nights, made to leave their coats and shoes behind them, taken to Paracuellos del Jarama where they had to dig their own graves and then were shot. 'Murdered by the Reds' became a familiar refrain. In Madrid alone more than a hundred thousand persons were taken from their homes during the night in the course of three years, and shot."

A Spaniard in the gleaming office of the *Editorial Católica* said to me: "I was astounded on my recent trip to the United States to realize that a civil war which happened almost a century ago is still remembered and commemorated."

I said: "I am astounded that on my travels around Spain I do not find more bitterness over a civil war that ended only sixteen years ago."

Here is a country in which virtually every man of thirty or over is a veteran of actual fighting. Almost all over twenty retain vivid and often shocking recollections. Scarcely a family was not closely struck by death.

The violence and hatred within one nation was of a ferocity unknown in history. "Naturally there was more feeling than if we had

been fighting a foreign enemy," a Spanish newspaperman said. "How can I hate someone I don't know?"

Today it seems all passion has been spent. When my ship, the *Guadalupe*, had touched at Vera Cruz, someone recognized Prieto, one of the Republican leaders who had fled to Mexico, on the dock. "Homesick for Spain, he had come down from Mexico City just to look at the ship," the cruise director told me. "When the captain heard about it later, he said he wished he had known—he would have invited Prieto on board for a drink."

Franco has offered amnesty to all in exile who are "free of blood on their hands"—innocent of atrocities. I heard of some who returned, to find themselves discriminated against, unable to get jobs or join clubs. "But you must remember," an American with one such friend said, "there is a heartless, no-holds-barred scramble these days in the struggle to get along." I heard of others who had been folded back into the life of their community as though nothing had happened. "He was a Red" no longer holds opprobrium.

Perhaps the explanation for the lack of rancor is that in Spain the lines were not so clearly drawn as between North and South with us; nor, after it was over, did one side inflict upon the other the punitive measures of the Reconstruction. Nationalists and Republicans were mixed up in all zones, and in many families. For the winners as well as the losers the memory is equally hateful; both sides are in accord that the ghastly experience must never be repeated.

Those who still get incensed over the conflict are not likely to be Spaniards.

Mention of the Spanish Civil War arouses strong feelings among some Americans, who tend to remember it, with more emotion than knowledge, as an heroic stand of democratic principles against the encroachment of fascism. I do not have the heart to dredge up the causes for the conflict, the right or wrong of either side, the aid one received from Hitler and Mussolini in relation to that received by the other from France and Russia, or any of the now dated controversies.

Both sides committed atrocities. In Carrión de Calatrava Popular

Front forces executed some eight hundred persons from different villages of the province and threw their bodies down a mine shaft. At Cáceres the Nationalists massacred three or four thousand, "consolidating the area." Those imprisoned by both "Reds" and "Whites" were beaten, starved, and ruthlessly shot. But from what former Republicans told me, as well as what Nationalists hurried to explain, I believe that the Loyalists (to use the term bitterly resented by the Nationalists as grossly misleading) were given to greater excesses. Their ranks were largely filled from the slogan-roused lower classes reveling in an opportunity to shatter every symbol of law and privilege, whereas Nationalist forces were integrated with the greater part of the well-disciplined Spanish Army, and they were fighting with quiet intensity for the very salvation, as they saw it, of Spain.

An American who was on hand throughout the conflict told me: "Of course Franco's forces won. They knew what they were doing. In the last days of the war the Republicans, on the other hand, were actually fighting each other in the streets of Madrid."

A former soldier and officer in the Loyalist forces, an ardent Anarchist, wrote me: "At the outbreak of the war I immediately joined an anarchist-sindicalist column. We were uncontrollable, without a semblance of discipline. I separated from them because I was not in accord with many things. I marched to Madrid with a column of the *Federación Anarquista Ibérica*, in which I found myself with the same type of companions as before at Teruel. I was disgusted with their conduct and had various altercations with these pseudo-idealists to the point of drawing pistols. In Valencia I was able to enroll in the International Brigade. Another life! *Here* were the real fighters for Liberty. . . ."

It is ironic and revealing that he had to turn to crusade-eager foreigners to find the ideals lacking among his own people.

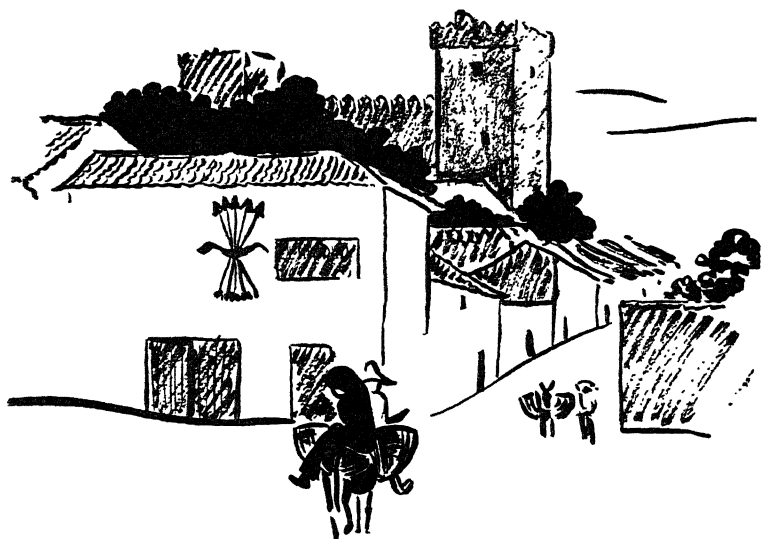
The exporter, slipping from Spanish to rusty English and back again, said: "The Whites were unified from the first, from *campesinos* to the generals. Atrocities did happen. They always do. In the heat of war men of every nation commit acts they would later like to forget, and Spaniards perhaps more than most. In the conquest of Lérida I saw a Moor who had stepped out of line shot on the spot. The Moors

were subject to the exceptionally strict discipline of the Foreign Legion. Of course when they could get away with them, they committed dreadful acts. On the Red side the lack of control was the rule, not the exception. I used to come into Barcelona on intelligence missions. Walking behind two militiamen one day I overheard one say to the other: 'Look at that man across the street. He is wearing a tie!' *Poom-poom*—they shot him. The man who could notch his gun for so many killed was given honors."

I had already heard a tremendous number of similar stories—stories that make our own Civil War seem like a Sunday picnic. I asked him: "Do people still discuss the War much among themselves?"

"Many are too busy in the struggle to live to look back. Those who have surmounted the bad years since then prefer to talk of more pleasant things. Those who have not done so well are more likely to remember."

The State is keeping alive the memory of the "War of Liberation" whether the people wish to be reminded or not. The newspapers are



periodically filled with commemorative features. Somewhere on the face of every town, beside the Falange symbol of yoke and cluster of arrows, is inscribed the roll call of fallen beneath *Presente!* White crosses by the roadside are inscribed: "Here were murdered——" With typical Spanish sense of drama the huge Alcázar crowning Toledo, formerly the Spanish West Point and a symbol of Nationalist resistance, is to be left partially in ruins as a Civil War monument to the heroic stand of its garrison.

To the dead of the other side there are no monuments, no inscribed roll calls, no pensions for war widows or state education for war orphans. The only memorial is in the minds of the people; to them the names of towns—Jaca, Puerto Santa María, Zaragoza—are synonymous with so many shot, so many starved out, so many killed in battle.

Every once in a while in some village one comes across a bullet-spattered wall where men have been stood up to die, shot by which side one cannot tell.

What did the Civil War accomplish at such frightful cost?

The answer is indicated, I believe, in what would have happened had there been no war.

Before I left for Spain my friends, without exception Loyalist in sympathy, were adamant in their belief that the Second Spanish Republic represented the democratic government chosen by the majority of the people in free elections, with no reason to believe that it was not a success, and every reason to doubt that the Popular Front was strongly Communist as alleged. At that time I knew only what I had heard and read; for me every argument was weakened by the extreme partisanship it reflected. It was not until after I had been in Spain a while and talked to disillusioned as well as disappointed Republicans, in addition to the plethora of Nationalists eager to set the foreigner right, that my own ideas began to crystallize. The evidence is overwhelming.

An American resident of Spain since before the Civil War had told me: "Franco was not 'overthrowing a legitimately elected government.' He was throwing out a bunch of gangsters. Nationalist 'rebels,'

so-called, vowed allegiance to Spain, not to a government bent upon destroying it."

By the time I met my exporter-informant in the Ritz Hotel I was prepared to believe him.

More dispassionate than most Spaniards on the subject, he actually had kind words for the other side. "The leaders of the Republic often acted in good faith, but they lacked authority," he said. "The mass of our people cannot distinguish between democracy and anarchy. They are as yet too uneducated to manage a Republican form of government by themselves."

"Suppose there had been no Civil War?"

"Had there been no war, or had the Republicans won the war, Spain would have continued to lean more and more on help from Russia, until in World War II we would have come under the Communist domination."

This was of course a former Nationalist speaking. It was interesting to ask former Republicans what would have happened in Spain had Franco been defeated. Discounting the out-and-out dreamers who held that today Spain would be "a garden, with communal farms," invariably the men I talked to admitted that for the first six to ten years the country would have needed "a very strong leader," in effect a dictator.

It is a matter of luck if a country gets a good dictator or bad one; once in control they do not voluntarily relinquish their power. The strong-arm methods of dictators for controlling a country charged with dissension only vary in a matter of degree.

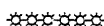
"It could happen again. And, next time, it will be worse."

I leaned forward to catch my companion's lowered voice below the rising clatter in the Ritz lounge: "In the last civil war we learned to what extremes of barbarism Spaniards could go. In the next we will know how to improve upon them. It is a thought too horrible for many to admit even to themselves. But—believe me—the knowledge that violence could again be unleashed is a shadow that lies like a weight across the land."

Apparently the war did not kill the roots of vitality so deeply em-

bedded in the dust-dry soil of Spain; it merely anesthetized them. Spain after ten years has begun to emerge from a postwar state of shock more highly charged with factions and frictions than ever. The Civil War awakened the country from a hundred-and-fifty-year lethargy; while serving as a catalyst to forge a new nationalism, it also revitalized the Spaniard's interest in his own government. Sickened by the thought of another civil war, yet the people are restive. Rabid partisanship is again shaping up.

As new dissensions gather force, coiling within the country like springs too tightly wound, the issues of the Spanish Civil War itself take on the class-room objectivity of history. Its arguments suddenly ring like long-dead political slogans, nostalgic to those who cared . . . but no longer very pertinent.



To Americans in Madrid the capital these days is a pleasant center for buzzing activities on planning and construction of the military bases, expanding business relationships, and general U.S.-Spanish accord in this initial stage of what we hope will be a long-term friendship with our newest ally.

Those not wholly bemused by all the smiles and hand-shaking must suffer moments of uneasiness. For the entire national structure of Spain is like a delicately balanced disc revolving around an axis in the person of one man.

As a result of the Military Agreement, the United States now has a considerable stake in this country, and plans to dispose of additional millions on economic aid, construction of bases, and maintenance of personnel. A sizable amount of American business capital is also committed.

Tomorrow this entire investment could come crashing, along with a segment of carefully planned air strategy, if this one man were to die in his sleep or be the target for an assassin's bullet.

The stability of Spain—suddenly of importance to the United States—hinges solely upon the health of its Chief of State, General Francisco Franco.

Franco in his 1947 Law of Succession proclaimed Spain a monarchy; in the event of his unexpected death a Regency Council will appoint a king, probably the exiled son of the late King Alfonso XIII, Don Juan de Borbón, or his son Juan Carlos, now being groomed for the job under Franco's sanction. But there is no guarantee that the emotionally charged Spanish people, generally, would accept the new ruler so arbitrarily selected.

Specifically, the Falange Movement—official political party of Spain with a network of bureaucracy firmly clamped upon every community, and its youth groups and labor syndicates representing the nation's most vital forces—is determined that the Monarchy shall not be reinstated.

Representing 45 per cent of the authority in office, the Falange is bitterly resented by virtually everyone not a member. Its most deadly enemies are the Monarchists, to whom the Falange is anathema. It is between these two factions that the fight would be most likely to break out; and where it would end, heaven only knows.

To those Americans to whom it means anything at all, Falange is a fighting word, and in it are epitomized all the evils of fascism. One evening in Madrid I took an American friend to a special program at the club of the Feminine Section of the Falange. She peered around her as though she were braving a fascist headquarters whose closed doors guarded who-could-tell-what sinister secrets. I suspect she was thrilled.

Actually, the *Sección Feminina* is the one branch of Falange operations which few can find cause to criticize. While the Civil War was still on, this organization inaugurated a program for the re-education of middle and lower class women. Every Spanish girl must serve six months with the Section, three receiving instruction, three donating time and work in one way or another. A young woman cannot obtain a passport or permission to be married unless she has done her stint of social service with the Falange. Its organization reaches into every small village, where *visitadores* give lectures on child care, sewing, and cooking. Its efficiency undoubtedly varies according to the personnel in different locales.

"The reason the death rate has fallen so dramatically—Spain and Sweden have the lowest death rate in the world—is because of the work of the *Sección Feminina*," one of its ardent admirers told me. The training school I visited at Aranjuez, run in conjunction with a model farm, from which the girls are sent all over the country as instructors, was certainly a bright and welcoming community.

The Falange could be all that it is accused of, and still be full of surprises; for nothing in Spain is so simple as to be merely what it seems. I had thought of the Falange as a fascist-type organization which has tirelessly made capital of its victory over potential Communism. It startled me to learn that Falangists use the term "comrade" among themselves as a means of address; to read in the news reports that Falangists in the student riots of February, 1956, in Madrid were shouting such all-too-familiar cries as "Down with capitalism!" and "Long live the Revolution!"; to have my Falange friends make such equally familiar statements as "Wealth that is inherited rather than earned can only be accepted with guilt," and: "Each person should work, to eat."

The anti-Monarchy pamphlets and sheets put out by the University of Madrid students (half-jokingly called "subversive" by the Falange friend who gave me some) ring with such expressions as: "We must fight for the recovery of the Spanish proletariat on a social-sindicalist base," and: "The problem of Spain today is to alleviate the lot of the workers."

"The Spanish youth did not fall so that all could continue as before," reads a message titled *Between Pain and Hope*; "it did not fall so that the same privileged classes could continue with identical privileges. . . ."

The anachronism crops up at every turn. Many in the lower classes speak with contempt of Falange bureaucrats as *señoritos*—little gentlemen, i.e., sissies; yet the most formidable props in the Falange structure, leaning inward straight from every factory to Madrid, are the powerful labor syndicates made up from the same lower classes.

Apart from whatever proletarian cause the Falange may have made its own, it is not improbable that Communists, Socialists, and Anarchists use their membership in the syndicates and youth organizations—

it is prohibited by law to form private groups—to meet and retain among themselves their identity. An American at the University of Madrid told me he knew several Falange students who had made it clear to him that if it were possible they would be Communists.

Discussing the Republic with a Spaniard, I voiced the belief popular with Americans that there had been few, if any, Communist elements in political office; I had read, I said, that actually there was only a negligible number of Communist representatives in the National Cortes.

"There were Communists in the Cortes, under other than the Communist label," he said, and added pointedly: "This is as true today as it was then."

Large numbers of Communists and Anarchists were incorporated into the Falange right after the Civil War. A foreigner who has lived in Spain off and on since the Republic told me: "I know Falangists now raising the open palm in salute who once raised the clenched fist." And from a South American diplomat in Madrid: "I can tell you as a fact that there are Communists today in very high office."

To an American friend in Madrid I expressed my dismay: "We think of Franco Spain as solidly anti-Communist. And yet the sole political party in Spain—the Falange—is apparently riddled by Communism."

"Yes. Our military bases may turn out to be little more than 'castles in Spain'—built on shifting sands," he observed.

There is no doubt but that the Falange is fired with a revolutionary spirit. To one member I said: "I think that you Falangists are half-hoping for an explosion in Spain, even if it means another dreadful Civil War."

His answer came with the snap of a wire clipper: "You are correct."

Others express more reasonable views. "We feel that the Falange embodies the best of both Right and Left," an active member said. "One cannot always merely be *against* something, such as Communism. One must also be *for* something. The Movement is the only body in Spain with a political creed. Take away the Falange and Spain would be left a political vacuum. We, at least, have the principles of José Antonio to guide us."

From third-hand reports that reached me, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, founder of the Falange Movement, was an attractive young sophisticate who in all probability while killing time in the cafés of Madrid hit upon the "natural" of channeling the growing dissatisfaction with the Republic into an organization of youthful zealots fired by a militant nationalism, and with return-to-Spanish-traditionalism as their goal. The Movement rapidly gained followers; when Franco, a professional soldier, found himself at the end of the war with a country to govern, the Falange Party constituted a ready-made organization which he promptly put in office with himself at its head, José Antonio having been liquidated early in the war by the Loyalists.

The Falange knows that without Franco it would go under.

Today they deify José Antonio; the Party's founder is constantly dangled before the nation as savior and martyr, the object of an adulation which one suspects is encouraged by Franco, who could see in it a stimulus as well as outlet for patriotic fervor. Why not? Dead men offer no competition.

Fervor is essential to the life of the Falange—it must be fighting for or against something, else wither on the vine. Franco's proclamation of Spain as a monarchy has given the Falange fresh fighting spirit; today the full energies of the only organized youth element and the entire organized labor body of the nation, as well as the bureaucratic machine, are fanatically directed against the return of an "archaic" institution which—they well realize—would spell the doom of the Movement. José Antonio's "traditionalism" did not include the return of the Monarchy.

"To promise to reinstate the Royal Family was a most serious error of the Caudillo's," one of my Falange friends said. "The Monarchy is like a piece of ripe fruit. José Antonio wrote that one cannot place a fallen apple back upon the tree. The system is antiquated. Spaniards deserve a more modern, intelligent leadership.

"We will not permit the return of the Monarchy. In three months the people would throw it out."

A lawyer in Bilbao nodded when I suggested that in the event of Franco's sudden death there might be trouble. "The Falange would make a *putsch*—the young Falange. The Monarchy with them is a

matter of life and death. As quickly as possible they would throw all Monarchists in jail—”

“Although they had committed no crime?” It was about the stupidest thing I could have said.

He smiled. “In Spain it is not necessary to commit a crime to be put in jail.”

I had not been in Spain a week before I became conscious of the growing tensions. On the train from Vigo to Madrid I shared a dining car table with a handsome woman whose icy, eye-averting reserve broke down into the most engaging friendliness when I finally addressed her. In the course of conversation I commented on the peculiar situation of a monarchy minus a king.

“*Shsh.*” She indicated the table of three men across from us. “We can’t talk here. Later.”

When we reached her compartment, she pulled me inside and shut the door, then poured out her political heart. She was among those who longed for the return of the Royal Family, admired Franco, and detested the Falange Party. Her husband, a Nationalist officer, had been killed in the War.

“The people are filled with uncertainty and fear. Is this—this detestable control of our lives by the Falange—what my husband gave his life for? If something should happen tomorrow to General Franco, what would become of us?” It was the first time I had ever seen anyone wring his hands. “Oh, why won’t he give us back our king?”

Monarchists include the gentry, a conservative Middle Class element, plus many Spaniards craving a change but fearing bloody dissension, who dream of a constitutional monarchy that would insure a cohesiveness and continuity above political squabbles. Rent with intrigue, top Monarchist factions are already jockeying for place . . . and lining up the Royal favors they will naturally expect.

Monarchists know that without Franco they would go under.

Could the Bourbons provide the strong leadership that the Spaniards themselves admit their peculiar temperament makes necessary? The chances are that the Monarchy could only exist with the active support, bayonets fixed, of the Spanish Army—assuming that the

Army wins out in its life or death struggle with the Falange.

Falangists uneasily claim tough, independent Minister of War Muñoz-Grandes as a member, but in a fight for its life the Falange could easily find the Army aligned with its archenemy.

Armed forces include the Civil Guard, patrolling highways and villages and trained for front-line duty; the Military Police (*Policía Armada*—the really tough boys, omnipresent in all towns); and the Regular Army.



The Army, with 350,000 men under arms and an emergency strength of four million that could be called up within twenty-four hours, constitutes a formidable military force. The twenty-four divisions, rapidly being equipped with modern U. S. arms, are strategically disposed to exert immediate military control over every sector of Spanish territory.

Traditionally in dictatorships, upon the slightest indication of unrest, the Army moves in "to restore order." Possible action of the Army's several strong leaders upon the sudden death of Franco is open to interesting conjecture.

More strongly entrenched than ever, the Church, with its wealthy lay affiliate, the highly organized Catholic Action, in any outbreak of trouble would doubtless swing its vast moral influence behind whichever conservative faction promises the least danger of change—or

possibly, if supported by the Army, launch its own political bid for national leadership.

The Church today is so closely aligned with the regime that in any uprising the priests would be massacred as never before.

The scorned opinion of the Spaniard in the streets and fields (fully eighteen million, I was told, belong to no political group) would undoubtedly find expression, traditionally explosive, once the lid is off. He is now usually for Franco but against the regime; devoutly Catholic but often cynically anticlerical; oppressed by the memory of the Civil War, but with maturing children restless for an outlet for youthful energies.

"Unless the change comes from the top," a high official in our Embassy said, "all hell will break loose."

The joker in the Spanish deal is that there is no alternative to the Franco government that is acceptable to all—or even to any part of the populace, without a fight to the death by the rest.

As for another try at a republic, the hopes of even the most visionary died with the signing of the Military Agreement between Franco and the United States.

In the face of all these opposing factors the mission of undercover Communists and Anarchists in Spain today—to foster friction—would appear to be shockingly easy.

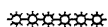
Only Franco's deft manipulation of the reins of state keeps the growing hatreds from flaring into open conflict. One gathers that every thinking Spaniard must be nursing the nightmare thought: what if Franco died tomorrow?

When I would ask this, discreetly, the Spaniard to whom I was talking would usually laugh—a short, one-syllable laugh, wholly without mirth. Three Americans living in Madrid admitted that they have set aside sufficient currency *in dollars* to buy or bribe quick access to the border.

"I suppose I'm foolhardy," an American building a house outside Barcelona told me, "to invest my cash and hopes in this country when it could blow up any moment. I for one am hoping that Franco gets plenty of rest, takes his vitamin pills, and wears a charm to ward off assassin's bullets."

Whatever the attitude of Americans toward dictatorships, one glance at the map of Europe will make clear the future importance to us of this fortified peninsula, sole solid bulwark—so long as Franco lives—against any sweep of Communism across a continent of tired, dispirited nations.

As global strategy is shaping up, so much in the Western Hemisphere hinges upon the health of General Franco that the deceptively unimpressive person of the dictator may well be regarded by the Kremlin as a target fully as important as any marked for atomic destruction.



Many would prefer it otherwise, but the fact remains that Francisco Paulino Hermenegildo Teodulo Franco-Bahamonde is a success story.

For the first ten years after the Spanish Civil War knowledgeable forecasters were predicting—hopefully—that it was only a matter of time before General Franco's dictatorship would collapse, as a result of increasing hostility and a wrecked economy within, and the pressure of censure plus economic blockade from without.

Instead, Franco enjoys enormous prestige and apparent security in his own country, and is being viewed with growing respect, however grudging from some quarters, by the rest of the world.

Whatever the final outcome, his achievement will have a place in history. A professional soldier without previous experience in government or economics, and unaided by the democracies, he fashioned a war-prostrated, 50-per-cent-hostile country into a self-sustaining nation able to barter, on its own terms, with the United States over lease of military bases. Still hard-up but self-sufficient, Spain—recently an economic vacuum—had embarked on a period of economic expansion *before* the Coming of the Dollar.

How has Franco done it?

In 1939 Spain was one big gaping wound from three years of peculiarly bloody warfare. Whole areas were devastated. Industries were locked at a standstill. Roads, railroads, bridges, communications

were wrecked. Thousands were homeless. Agriculture was paralyzed; nor was there money for seed, fertilizer, and necessary equipment.

Spain before the Civil War had been the third largest gold-holding country in the world. In the last frantic exodus from Madrid the Loyalist leaders fled with the nation's gold reserve, reportedly sending most of it to Moscow.

Some of the Allied powers were not only opposed to extending credit to the hated fascist regime, but the United States, after sending a few token "humane" shipments of staples, actually tried to dissuade other nations from entering into trade deals with the stricken country. Humanitarianism evidently was intended only for the democracies; fascists could starve.

In Spain they did. A retired army officer heading the American Red Cross "mercy mission" taking food and medicine to Spain in 1941 wrote back: "The people are eating grass, leaves, roots and cats. The masses are sullenly enduring suffering unimaginable to those of you at home."

"*Sullenly enduring*" indicates part of Franco's problem: to bring to heel the populace, all of it hungry, disorganized, and disillusioned, half of it—the defeated half—truculent and bitter.

Emergency measures, some of them not pleasant to think about, were imposed under rigid police enforcement. The strong-arm methods of dictators make sordid reading and are already too well documented for those in Spain to be recorded here. An American in Madrid summarized Franco's early tactics in the adage: "The best way to make a thousand good Catholics, Falangists, or anything else, is to take a thousand and one, and shoot one."

The grip of the government closed in on every aspect of daily life. The government itself, as might be expected, remained firmly in the grip of the dictator. The National Cortes is in appearance a parliament, but all the members have been appointed by Franco, one-third directly, two-thirds indirectly.

Again, there is little that can be added to what has already been reported on all the "lacks" in Spain: lack of free assembly, of free trade unions, of free enterprise, of free expression, of habeas corpus. All the evidence that this is a totalitarian, police-controlled dictator-

ship is here, to as damning a degree as it might please one to find.

A Bilbao industrialist, in speaking of the stringent measures deemed necessary for the nation to regain its strength and purpose, noted soberly: "Many of us are unhappy about the control over our lives by the State. But this is the bitter medicine we Spaniards have had to take. Like a patient after a bad accident, we may not like what we are forced to comply with during our recuperation, but we know that it is for our own good."

Others are not so philosophical. "How long must the nation be so repressed?" a retired diplomat commented bitterly in near-accentless English. "Like a Jack-in-the-box too long shut up, when the lid is finally lifted, the spring may be gone."

Along with the necessity for compressing an undisciplined populace into a submissive mass, there was the urgent problem of patching up the wreckage and getting the economy rolling.

How does one create something out of nothing?

The gambits worked out on the government level included some slick legerdemain in internal finance, and daring acrobatics with foreign markets. Property owners were required to pay back taxes for the three war years. Workers of all kinds who had been dismissed from their jobs in "Red" territory because they were anti-Red (but not enough anti-Red to be killed) were paid 75 per cent of all their uncollected wages, after the Civil War, by a government labor agency. The money was obtained by a surcharge of 20 per cent on the *Cuota Sindical* which is a labor charge of 1.5 per cent that employers have to pay on their payroll.

The government issued the necessary pesetas (printed in Germany) to implement these actions, and then through rigid fiscal and export controls backed the inflated currency to a degree where some measure of stability was achieved. Olive oil, along with bread, the basic food essential, was shipped to Germany and Italy; the populace was starving, but it was more important to establish foreign credit than that the people be fed.

The first sparks were ignited. Slowly the forces of reconstruction were set in motion. Like the talents in the Bible, each hard-gained

asset was made to multiply itself. No siphoning off of the least bit of energy, money, or effort was permitted beyond the borders unless it brought immediate returns. All this was put under way during the early forties, Spain's Dark Ages.

World War II proved a lifesaver. By remaining neutral (an epic achievement in itself), the country was able to catch its breath—and profit from the situation. Spain is one of the world's greatest producers of mercury and wolfram, and an important source for tungsten, copper, iron, and sulphur; it was now in a position to let Germany and the Allies try to outbid each other for these strategic materials.

And then, just as the nation was regaining balance, the drought of 1947-48 almost knocked it reeling again. Fortunately Argentina answered the call for help with large shipments of wheat and other staples—on credit.

Since then the process of filling the vacuum, apparently so hopeless at first, has proceeded with a speed that is impressive. "People comment that Spain is still twenty years behind the times," a Madrid banker told me. "But at the end of the Civil War such was the destruction we were eighty years behind the times. In little more than a decade we have closed a tremendous gap."

I was amazed by the evidence everywhere of recent construction—roads, bridges, factories, whole new towns—but not so new that they could have been built with the American dollars only just coming in. The Department of Devastated Areas alone has rebuilt around 230 modern villages. My rather vulgar reaction was: "But where does Spain get the money?"

Excise and property levies supply a substantial part of the tax income of the government. In Spain there is a stamp—a real stamp—on everything from laundry receipts to a package of Melba-type toast, for sums often amounting only to a fraction of a U. S. cent, but in the aggregate mounting up.

In 1953 with the signing of the Military Agreement with the United States the door was opened at last to the military and economic aid so generously extended to other nations, from our World War II enemies to Communist Yugoslavia. By then Spain was already self-sufficient;

although on the financial rocks, there had never been any indication that the regime would fall. Franco could afford to watch dispassionately and possibly with amusement our suddenly friendly overtures.

Today the standard of living is still pathetically low, the grip of the government on private life is relaxed but not released, rigid controls guard every asset, the complaints against the bureaucracy doubtless all are justified—but the country is firmly on its feet.

The future, barring bombs out of a Red sky or death of the dictator, is as bright as the U. S. dollars that now prime it.

The real story out of Spain, I believe, is the near miracle that has been achieved in the recuperation of the country, *without* the U. S. help which half the world has come to take as a matter of course.

Had the Republicans won the Civil War, the same problems would have existed, requiring equally drastic measures. The nation might have had reason to wish heartily that it had at its head the same man.

In normal times just another army officer who might have remained obscure, General Francisco Franco can thank the whimsical hand of fate—in the form of a revolution, a plane crash, and a few firing squads—for lifting him into a role custom-tailored for his talents.

It is possible that on occasion he may have given fate's hand a nudge.

An impressive quality about Spain's Chief of State is that such a genius for leadership—adroit, unerring, and ruthless—can be so deceptively packaged in this wholly undistinguished, rather professorial, but never ridiculous, figure.

How much is happenstance that placed him where he is today probably only Franco himself knows. "Franco owes his success to a negative element around him, as well as to his own positive qualities," a Madrid banker told me. "Right after the Civil War everyone was too tired to contest the dictatorship he automatically assumed. Since then, general weariness of war, lack of a strong enough leader to replace him, and fear of Communism as a result of internal discord have helped to keep him where he is. Plus, of course," he added dryly, "the full force of the Army and Military Police behind him."

A negative element continues to be one of the most useful assets of the dictatorship. Just as Communism in one sense is the best friend of

the Catholic Church—in that the Church can loudly advertise its solid front against it—so too is it Franco's best friend: the line that the regime is a "firm bulwark against Communism" is not only being played to the hilt at home, but it has helped to bring the United States calling humbly upon the so-recently deprecated dictator.

"And then, too," the banker continued in the same dry tone, "all the military strong men who might have become possible rivals were somehow liquidated. Always it is only Franco who is left."

Long before he rose to the dictatorship, Franco had made a name for himself as a military strategist. "He has a genius for tactics by which he can cover more front line with less troops than any military leader in history," a former officer of the Blue Division told me. "Franco covered forty-five kilometers [twenty-eight miles] of front line with the same number of troops as the United Nations used in Korea to cover fifteen kilometers [nine miles]. His own physical courage is unquestioned. He sought front-line duty in Morocco, where the Riff tribesmen were in revolt. He helped organize the Foreign Legion, remaining in Morocco twenty years in almost constant combat."

The American press has made capital of Franco's order, as Chief of Staff of the Army in 1934, to bring in the Foreign Legion to quell the open revolt against the Republic of socialist miners in Asturias. The important city of Oviedo was in the hands of the miners. The Moors (so the story goes) were told that if they took the city they would be permitted *carte blanche* inside it. They did. Lunching at the Hotel Principado the day I drove through, I received from a quiet-voiced waiter an idea of the ghastly orgy of rapine and looting that ensued. "How could the Moors know, and what did they care, if a house belonged to the enemy side or not? They entered all houses."

A few such tales, and one receives an impression of a man with frightening lack of feeling, dedicated with total dispassion first to his military career and now to the job of directing a state.

"In what he has to do, Franco is a very balanced man," the former member of the Blue Division continued. "He knows when things are possible and when impossible. Franco is deeply versed in history. He may not be very cultured in music, art, or painting, but anyone read-

ing the articles he writes in *Arriba*, under his pen name of 'Macauley,' realizes that he does know history. He writes his own articles and speeches. His writing is very austere and clean."

An Englishman who has lived in Spain many years told me: "Franco is a man who above all others uses words to disguise his thoughts. When he gives a short answer, you know you've had a straight one. When he gives a long one, it is a certain sign that he has no intention of telling you a thing. He is the only man who could talk down Hitler. When Hitler met him at the border, expecting without much trouble to storm negotiations through for passage of his divisions to Gibraltar and thus bottle up the Mediterranean, Franco scarcely gave him a chance to get in a word. In Hitler's correspondence with Mussolini he describes this as the worst experience he ever had—he wrote he'd rather have had his teeth pulled!"

Franco's genius for strategy is shown in his ability to keep his friends as well as his enemies guessing. He knows exactly what he is doing, even if no one else does, and most specifically when he appears to be doing nothing at all. Franco is from Galicia; Gallegos, who produce many sharp-witted politicians, are noted for being canny. "In his favorite policy of sit-and-wait," a Spaniard told me, "Franco is showing Gallego astuteness."

"*Paco Plomo*" ("Leaden Frank") and "*Paco el Lento*" ("Frank the Slow") are common nicknames for the man who in an emergency does nothing—then acts swiftly when it is least expected.

"Franco rarely does what one would reasonably count on," the Englishman continued. "He takes his time. He often seems to wait too long. But his timing is weird. He has yet to make a faulty move."

He added: "The man is completely cold. He never raises his voice. He has never been known to lose his temper. He is never irritable. He is the last man in the world to panic. He is absolutely sure of himself, which has the natural effect of making those around him uncertain of themselves. Nobody knows where or when the axe will fall. He entered the room at a cabinet meeting one morning, sat down, and said quietly: 'I want all of your resignations, except two.'

"Whenever Franco anticipates difficulties with his associates, he removes them. It's as simple as that."

His unusual abilities are called into full play as Franco maintains deft control of a country straining with rival factions and restive energies, while charting its future course among the international alliances only now opening up.

I was told by various people that Franco was "terrified of the Falange"—"takes his line from the Church"—and "sees in the Army a powerful threat." Perhaps. There is evidence that, on the other hand, Franco is afraid of nobody. It is more likely that he constantly plays one faction against the other, fostering frictions within the organizations of each, putting potential troublemakers under obligation to him, letting out just enough line at the right moment to permit the illusion of greater freedom, then taking it up sharply; and keeping all equally in the dark as to his own motives and plans.

As a sop to delude the populace that the dictatorship, now going on twenty years in power, is only temporary, Franco constantly reminds the country that his is only a "provisional" government; all grants of titles of nobility made by him, for instance, are "subject to future confirmation by the king."

Today feeling about Franco varies. While many as individuals may scorn him, or hate him, or resent him, as Spaniards they are proud of the way he has lifted the country back into world prominence. I encountered some who actually see in him a Messiah with semidivine powers. Others, probably out of Spanish perverseness, deprecate his ability. "He is *not* astute," a Spaniard in the hotel at Córdoba said in lowered voice. "If Quixote and Sancho Panza had married, their offspring would be Franco."

Indifferent to popularity, Franco collects jokes about himself. Unlike the Hitler-type dictators, Franco on occasion comes in close, informal contact with the people; there is no shutting off of the streets nor any huge military guard in which he is embedded. His colorful Moorish Guard, mounted on Arab horses, is pure show, an outrageous bit of theater which the public thoroughly enjoys.

Franco differs from the orthodox dictator pattern in many ways. He did not claw his way up from an underprivileged beginning, gathering fanatical followers around him, but was born of well-to-do,

middle-class parents (his father was a naval officer) and, until at the outbreak of the Civil War when he was thrust by the death in a plane accident of General Sanjurjo into the leadership of the Nationalist forces, had followed a standard military career in no way marked by political ambitions.

His private life is above reproach. In Madrid he remains aloof, living quietly without pomp at the Pardo Palace on the outskirts of town. Spaniards are proud of his wife, a dark-haired, gracious First Lady who lends her presence to many charity functions. Franco himself is a singularly uncolorful character. He does not drink or smoke. His only indulgence is mussels, on which he occasionally overeats and suffers liver attacks as a result. He is an excellent shot and loves to fish. He is a devout Catholic.

In the sixteenth century Philip II, in the heart of the huge Escorial he had built as palace-mausoleum for himself, played a lone hand in directing the affairs of his vast empire.

In the twentieth century, in the heart of the Pardo domesticity, General Franco—who is carving out of the Guadarrama mountainside a cathedral-large mausoleum for himself that for sheer breadth of undertaking threatens to rival the Escorial—quietly plays a lone hand as he directs the affairs of the small country along a course that could again make it a major power.

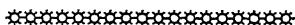
It is a course that could be aligned—as we are now committed to hoping that it will be—with the fate of Western Europe, that unfriendly Europe which Franco has publicly denounced as “decadent,” and the Anglo-American democracies still basically unsympathetic to his regime.

Or it could be aligned with new and vital forces formidably on the upsurge, those of the Arab world whose language Franco speaks, whose rulers he has one by one been royally entertaining, whose people he learned during his years in Morocco to understand and to like, with whose causes he has professed sympathy. Once again the emerging bloc of Arab influence extends out of the East across North Africa, possibly to reach up, as before, into that one-time Moslem land—Spain.

PART

V

OUR NEWEST ALLY



THERE IS DOUBTLESS some truth in most of what has been said against the Franco regime. The foreigner who announces as he first sets foot on Spanish soil, "I'm for Franco!" would make as much sense as those prepared to condemn every aspect of the military dictatorship.

Spain is quite obviously a police state. The serenity of the surface scene has only to be broken by the slightest ripple for one to be made instantly aware that the *policía*, in uniform or out, are very much on hand.

There are those who regard Franco Spain as the Bluebeard's chamber among Western Europe's countries. They cross the border looking around eagerly for confirmation of all the bad things they have heard about this police state. To them the Military Police at the border seem sinister (well, they *do* seem sinister). They are disappointed when they find no shooting in the streets. They imagine that every traffic policeman is watching them and suspect that their hotel rooms are searched and their mail read. The shabby woman selling lottery tickets outside the tourist agency is magnified, by the time they get back to the States, into droves of beggars who crawl out onto the streets after dark. They rationalize having spent healthy American dollars in this detested police state with the thought that some benefits thereof may seep down to the starving masses.

"What kills me," one friend of mine recently returned from a tour of Spain said, "is that most of our aid to Spain is being used to bolster the military, so as to keep Franco and Friends in power." (The greater part of U. S. aid is *intended* to modernize the Spanish Army; the remainder is designed to put the country on the healthiest possible basis as a military ally.)

"I hate fascism!" is the standard explanation my friends at home give when pressed to explain their violent antagonism to Franco Spain. And yet they are strangely indifferent to the same practices in other countries under different ideological names.

There is a peculiar paradox in this attitude toward Franco Spain. Many think nothing of rearming our World War II enemies—our Air Force personnel living and training with former *Kamikaze* and *Luftwaffe* pilots who boast of their bag of Allied planes—yet are indignant that the United States in its own interests should now be in partnership with a regime that did not actively join the Axis powers against us when there was considerable pressure on it to do so, but instead was of actual assistance both in the generous treatment of our downed pilots who sought sanctuary, and—something for which we should be eternally grateful—in keeping the Germans from closing off the Mediterranean at Gibraltar.

The Spaniards are condemned for entering into trade deals with Hitler—when war-exhausted Spain was grasping at any means to hold onto life; yet there is failure similarly to censure the British for doing precisely the same thing today with Communist China.

Virtually every defect which we are so quick to criticize in the Spaniards can be found among our own people. Every time that I began to feel incensed over the corruption in Spain, I had only to pick up an American news magazine, it seemed, to find some shocking incident of graft on a large scale going on at home. The fact that in Spain such practices are expected and often overt makes them no more right, but somehow less wrong.

Possibly the faults which we share with the Spaniards stand out in Spain because they are seen against an unfamiliar background. Most of them show up in better perspective when we match them with our own shortcomings.

We profess to be the most civilized country in the world with the highest standard of living, labeling the Spaniards "backward" and "primitive" and "barbaric." Yet our daily papers are a shocking record of teen-age gangsterism, riots, rackets, erotic crimes, bigotry, and the most vicious vandalism. I as a woman traveling alone could drive a car along back roads through the most remote and wild sections of Spain without the slightest fear—something which I am unable to do along sections of national highway in parts of my own country.

We deplore the exploitation of the underprivileged masses by the Spanish ruling classes as typically "Spanish," but forget the unspeakable conditions for workers in Industrial England until the turn of the century and in our own factory towns in the East before the unions stepped in.

In Spain we are quick to see the discrepancy between the very rich and the very poor—a discrepancy which exists throughout much of South America, North Africa, the Near and Far Easts, and other regions of the world where a few by birth or wits control most of the natural resources.

Oddly blind to the misery encrusting the rim of every large city, especially woven into the fabric of the greatest of them all—New York City—and which prevails throughout a large part of the world, in Spain we become emotionally involved in a situation that, however lamentable, has existed for thirty centuries.

We criticize the "inefficient" Spaniards for inability to think through and plan ahead, evidenced throughout Spain by unfinished buildings rotting in the elements because the money appropriated for them ran out; but we forget the millions of dollars in American farm, irrigation, and other equipment that is left to rust in fields and ditches all over the world in backward countries receiving U. S. aid because *we* failed to plan for its proper use after its arrival.

We gratuitously offer ourselves as models and mentors to the Spaniards, then resent it if the Spaniards oppose being "reformed." Spain is a country as firm in its belief that Roman Catholicism is the only true religion as Protestant emissaries are in theirs; yet American missionaries are indignant over restrictions placed on an intrusion which at best the Spaniards must consider presumptuous.

Discounting those writers who come solely to gush over the more romantic aspects of Spain, this country has been the victim of a bad press ever since the British with their "Black Legend" in the sixteenth century first started spreading word against the "cruel, despotic Spaniards." During the Spanish American War every stock denunciation was dredged up and given a big play in the U. S. press. In fact, it almost seems that we have never heard anything about this country except its bad side.

"English and American children are brought up in school on the idea of the conquistadors' lust for gold and silver," a librarian at the Naval Museum in Madrid told me. "And that all the Spaniards took to the New World were horses. But I know from the old shipping manifests that that was not all. Each ship took so many farmers, so many farming implements, so much seed—it reads like poetry! We took to the New World wheat, cotton, *roses*—and books! The conquistadors certainly exploited the Indians, but they also introduced education and religion."

Now that we are militarily aligned with Spain, the critics are saying: "I'd never trust the Spaniards as allies. They'd let us down in a moment."

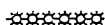
I frankly have no idea how the Spaniards would stack up in any conflict where we were fighting side by side. My impression is that the Spaniard is a born soldier—if you can get him to fight. His heart must be in it. Perhaps it is only a threat to his own soil, family, and God that can bring out the ferocity all too actively demonstrated in the Civil War.

Whether he could be made to die for someone else's country . . . I don't know.

In judging the Spaniards, if judge them we must, every yardstick we are accustomed to go by must be scrapped. To understand a people one should be able to crawl inside their mentality and think as they do. The Spaniard presents the ultimate challenge. His psychology is a tangle of all the sentiments we would assume to be in conflict. In Spain it is possible to be a Jew, a Catholic, a Democrat, and a Monarchist—all at the same time; the same person can have been a political prisoner under the Monarchy, the Republic, and the Franco

regime. Any appraisal of this country based on obvious premises will prove fallacious, and every bit of pertaining evidence will only serve further to confuse.

I came out of Spain with many impressions but only two convictions: First, that everything one hears about Spain, both the good and the bad, is true—but that its opposite is also equally true. Second, that the Spanish people are in every way diametrically different from ourselves—their psychology, their instincts, their way of life, and their emotions—and that it is impossible to judge them by our standards, and the height of folly to think that the solutions we have worked out for our own problems will prove the best answers to theirs.

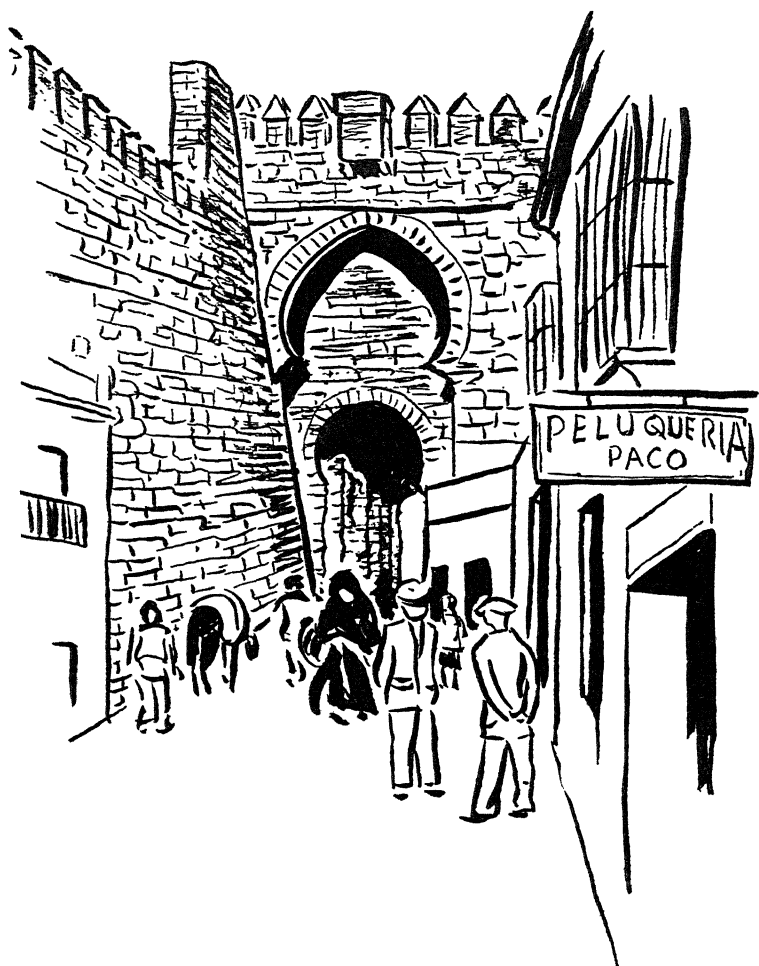


“My company sent me here to Spain thinking the deal would be a snap.” The Western drawl of the young man could be heard all the way across the Hilton Hotel patio. “My boss thought it would be like taking candy from a baby. Well—” he hunched his shoulders—“I’m leaving empty-handed. And I don’t even know what hit me.”

A man in our group smiled. “You can’t beat these people at their own game. And yet they often don’t even seem to be making sense—”

No one more thoroughly appreciates the mysteries of trying to make sense with the Spaniards than the increasing number of Americans who must live and work among them. The problems of house-keeping with servants who will go to any measure to keep from using a modern gadget, of doing business with a people who regard importance given to time and money as verging on the vulgar, make life among the Iberians sometimes baffling but rarely dull. They also show that the Spaniards can hold their own with some of our sharpest operators.

I am among the many who since 1952 have arrived in Spain, looked around, and thought that I would like to take advantage of the cheap labor, the opening markets, and undeveloped resources to go into business of some sort. At first glance Spain seems full of ripe opportunities for any alert entrepreneur. On second glance the pitfalls come to light. An invisible skein of complications, which only the



most determined manage to untangle or cut through, can quickly kill all dreams of getting rich on the low production costs in Spain. Carpetbaggers are promptly weeded out. Anyone who comes over to this country hoping to unload some bright, shiny new gadget on the "natives" is rapidly disillusioned. It is difficult to sell Spaniards imports of anything already being locally produced, no matter how badly—or of items capable of being locally manufactured.

A host of unpredictable difficulties have served to slow down the rush of American fly-by-night operators. Those who are staying on, trying to put down roots in Spain, are doing so less because they hope to clean up on the situation than because they like living in this country, and, well—just don't want to go home. "In the States we're the slaves of time," one happy expatriate put it. "Here, we're the masters of it."

Despite the many discouragements, a number of Americans have made for themselves jobs in Spain that are proving pleasant, if not strikingly profitable. There is the ex-movie man whose studio dubs in Spanish dialogue on imported films and English on those locally produced, which are just beginning to go out. There is the New York salesman working with the Spanish government on organizing in-the-home production of handicrafts for quantity export to American dealers. There is the young man in Madrid who runs an American Visitors' Bureau which picks up all sorts of loose ends for tourists. There are any number of men and women making use, in varying degrees, of inexpensive local handwork to style gift and specialty items for distribution at home.

But business tactics that are effective in New York and St. Louis fall flat in Madrid and Valencia.

The biggest and most common mistake made by American businessmen arriving in Spain is to approach the Spaniards with our "let's get things done around here" attitude. High-pressure salesmanship gets one exactly nowhere in Spain. The best way for an outsider to make a fool of himself is to try to railroad a scheme through with those "lazy, behind-the-times Spaniards."

The Spaniard is likely to lean back languidly and watch the American fret; he distrusts speed, is not used to hurrying, and doesn't like to be pushed, if for no other reason than that it's undignified.

"The Spaniard may not give the impression of being very alert," an Englishman who has lived for many years in Spain told me, "but he is sharper than he appears just because he does move slowly. He takes plenty of time to study the proposition from all angles. If he decides against it, it's for a good, sound reason, and his 'no' is final. Result: sharks, to their immense surprise, find themselves politely

and firmly turned away. Contrary to what certain visitors may think, the Spaniards are not the simple primitives before whom a salesman can profitably dangle bright baubles."

The primary requisite for dealing happily with the Spaniards, according to one American business representative with six years in the country, is courtesy. "You can be firm, you can be brutally frank, you can even be threatening, just so you do it politely. The Spaniard respects courtesy above all else."

Spain is a land of interesting if limited business opportunity for anyone with a sound idea, the time to slow down to the Spanish pace, the knack of getting along with a people as astute as they are unpredictable—and the ability to accept a wholly new concept of ethics.

To get anything done in Spain, literally anything at all, requires any two of the following three factors: time, money, and friends—and often all three. "Pull" is important in any country, but in Spain it is everything.

"The single most essential element for any foreigner who hopes to make a living in this country," a French engineer in one of the provincial capitals told me, "is influence—friends in the proper place. Particularly if he gets into trouble! A business competitor or personal enemy has only to drop a word to the authorities that this foreigner talks against Franco for this foreigner to be ushered to the border. He has no recourse unless he has highly placed friends. Within a matter of hours his entire investment of time, money, and effort is lost."

I asked an American businessman in Madrid about this. "Absolutely correct. Only don't count too heavily on the friends. The Spaniards don't want a lot of Americans coming around asking favors whenever we get into a mess. There's plenty of sincere *amistad* between us, but it shouldn't be put too much to the test."

For this reason, savvy Americans who wish to go into business in Spain work through a Spanish associate who knows the ropes and doesn't mind pulling them, or even wrapping them about a competitor's neck. Ground rules in the business world may exist, but the Spaniards reserve the privilege of making and breaking them as they see fit.

Sooner or later every foreigner makes this discovery: whatever the problem, and wherever the difference of opinion, the Spaniard always gets his way. A sense of humor and a controlled blood pressure are essential for living in Spain, a country in which one is likely to find oneself frequently stopping to take a deep breath and count—to fifty. The Spaniard will do what he wants to, when he wants, and anyone dealing with him might as well be prepared for this.

Lunching one day at a *típico* restaurant outside Madrid, all of us but my sister-in-law ordered, to begin with, a potato omelet. Helen went into detail with the waiter about a French omelet having on the side a tomato sauce, but made of fresh, not canned tomatoes, etc., etc. The man could not have been more attentive in making careful note of these instructions. He brought her a potato omelet.

It's no use getting mad. The Spaniard will kill himself to win your approval, but at the first indication of criticism he loses all interest and renounces any personal responsibility. The Spaniard's ability to withdraw and take an objective reading on you is most exercised if there is any disagreement. Laugh, and the Spaniard laughs with you. Get angry, and he laughs at you.

Every once in a while I had reason, valid or imagined, to be annoyed—a bellhop had put my bags down on a wet sidewalk, or a maid in dusting had mixed up my papers, or I thought I had been overcharged and would let myself get emotional. Invariably I would end up feeling ridiculous. It is at such moments that the Spaniard, who of course is never to blame, begins to look at you curiously, as though you were putting on an interesting performance for his benefit.

In short, to get along with the Spaniards, particularly in business, an American has to re-orient himself entirely. One American businessman put it this way: "These are the most pleasant people in the world to do business with, if you can do it their way. The Spaniard never goes back on his word, once given on any serious matter. He has a high sense of personal honor. When you come to an agreement, you can be sure that he will abide by it. But don't offend him by asking for his signature. It will be forthcoming, if necessary, in due time."

In due time. . . .

Time is an element which, the longer one remains in Spain, be-

comes of less and less importance. It upsets the Spaniards that Americans supervising the construction of the military bases should be so concerned with it.

A Spanish contractor was actually trembling with emotion as he told me: "You Americans make us sign a contract that the work will be completed by a certain date, and if we do not meet this deadline we are penalized. We Spaniards have never worked under these conditions, and we can't do it!"

I repeated this to an American engineer. "The idea of a penalty clause is new here," he said, "and it won't do these people any harm to work under it. I doubt if any other country in Europe could have accomplished so much with the pathetically little that Spain has had to work with in the past few centuries, but just the same, if Spain ever expects to snap out of her lethargy and take her place among other Western nations, she will have to stop idling along and get on the job."

He added: "But they *won't* be penalized and they'll continue getting six-month extensions until the jobs are finally completed at the same old Spanish pace. There's a loophole-clause in the Agreement which they're already working for all it's worth. All the Spaniards have to do is raise their voices and wave their hands and mention preserving 'delicate relations,' and we give in. These people will end up by making fools of us yet. In any agreement between us there's always a loophole—and the Spaniards always find it."

The Spaniard always wins!

As Europeans and as a mixture of ancient Mediterranean stocks, the Spaniards have been accustomed for thirty centuries to pitting their wits against those of their neighbors. Despite a history marked by disastrous diplomacy, they are, compared to us, a wise and wily people, quick to appraise a person—or a nation.

The verdict, as expressed to me many times both directly and indirectly, is not flattering: the United States is a Gargantuan child, powerful, generous, good-natured—and unbelievably naïve. Americans are "*muy gracioso pero muy niño*"—"very charming but very childish."



Before I left Spain I had already heard of a couple of cases where the Spaniards in top-level transactions have shown us up as *muy ingenuo* because (I suspect) our people were bemused by all this current Spanish-U.S. amiability, fancy parties on estates outside Madrid, and the delight of dealing with a duke. In almost any contest of wits the Spaniards can run circles around us. And today, with the United States, they are playing on their own home grounds.

It isn't so much that we're dumb. It's just that we're different.

"Spaniards are intuitive, we go direct to fundamentals," the mayor of a north-coast town said. "Americans are diverted by superficials." Dali had to go to the United States to succeed." He added with unsmiling candor: "In Spain, to impress an American it takes only one marquis, one castle, and four flamenco dancers."

Gracious, considerate, and courteous—but the very opposite of genial—the Spaniard doesn't understand our back-slapping, buddy-buddy brand of good will. With a Spaniard, *form* comes first. "You can get anything out of them, so long as you save their face and retain their respect," the American with six years' experience in Spain said.

He continued: "The cavalier attitude of many Spaniards toward time and money should not be interpreted as lack of self-interest. The Mediterranean is the cradle of the trader. These people operate on an 'I'm for me' instinct that dates back three thousand years. In dealing with them we tend to forget this."

An engineer I ran into in a provincial capital most comprehensively summarized the complaints against our newest collaborators that I had been picking up from a number of Americans:

"The U.S. Government is now lending money to Spain for almost any kind of project. It's bad enough that we should be financing all the bright schemes the Spanish government might cook up, but we're also sinking the American taxpayer's money into purely private enterprises, with no means for supervision or control. Contracts for construction of the bases are now being given out directly to Spanish firms—we no longer control this dispensation of funds. Inevitable result: a bigger percentage of U.S. dollars being sidetracked into private accounts.

"Spain needs aid, but she wants it with no strings attached. Some of us feel that we should have a say as to what happens to American dollars over here. The Spaniards, of course, want the privilege of spending them as they see fit. It's a source of friction. And because our policy seems to be one of placating the Spaniards at every turn, they usually end up by having things their way.

"The truth is," he said disgustedly, "we're soft. There's too much sentimentality—too big an emphasis on *amistad*. There comes a time when you have to tell a Spaniard off—firmly and politely, *without* insulting him."

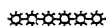
Meanwhile, intense pride impels the Spaniards to deprecate any help we give them. One can soon get the idea that by accepting the considerable aid we are now pouring into the country they are actually doing us a favor.

From the first the Spaniards have tried to minimize the impression that they are making military concessions. The Military Agreement is for lease of bases for an initial ten-year period with two five-year renewals, after which the bases revert to the Spaniards. This took nearly two years to work out. "Whatever the clauses in the Agreement," the American engineer informed me, "the chances are that in the course of time all the bases, representing hundreds of millions of American dollars, along with most of the American material on them, will be turned over to Spanish ownership virtually gratis."

To which an American businessman in Barcelona added an observation that had been expressed to me by others, including one Spaniard critical of his own government: "Spain is not living up to the agreements. The Spaniards are supposed to give full publicity to the U. S. aid. They are not doing this. In Article Number Two they agree to check inflation and to unify the exchange rate. They have made no attempt to do either. Do we insist that they take action on these points? Of course not!"

He added: "While we sneer at these people for being so far behind the times, they're outwitting us in all negotiations."

It seems to me that the Spaniards can scarcely be held at fault for being sharper than we are; they are merely exercising the instinct of survival by looking out for their own interests. If in any of our dealings in Spain we come out on the short end, the fault is ours for not being able to cope with the unique mentality of our newest collaborator.



The American couple had just arrived in Madrid from a motor trip through most of Europe. Both were beaming as on a golden November morning we strolled beneath the trees dividing the Avenida Castellana. "It hits you at once!" the girl said. "The friendly climate in Spain—so different from most places we've been. Here, they actually like Americans!"

The man said, "You get the impression that Spain alone among

European nations feels a sincere friendship toward the United States. It's rather gratifying, and a decided novelty. Apparently the resentment of the U.S. Colossus-Croesus and its dollar-bearing emissaries hasn't reached this country—" He paused and added: "Yet."

It is indeed possible that the Spaniards like us because they have not, until now, had an opportunity to know us.

A woman active in Madrid's artistic circles became enthusiastic one day over the new Spanish-U.S. accord: "We are destined to be warm friends. We are alike in so many ways!"

I asked what Americans she knew. She named the three Embassy heads of information and cultural departments, men specifically picked for their understanding of Spanish-speaking peoples.

"Have you met any of the Military Group?"

"No."

"Any American businessmen? Or tourists?"

She had not. Had she done so, however casually, she might have questioned that Americans and Spaniards could ever be soulmates. It would, in fact, be difficult to imagine two peoples more diametrically opposite than (to capsule our national temperaments) the easy-going American extrovert, and the hypersensitive, painfully introverted Spaniard.

The truth is that we not only know almost nothing about each other, but what little knowledge we do have is based on very shaky premises which include a fine set of mutual misconceptions.

Our mental picture of the Spaniard, if we have any at all, tends to be romanticized, or colored by abhorrent stories of Franco fascism. But: those of us who have had the good fortune actually to know these people almost invariably like them enormously.

With the Spaniards, curiously, it is exactly the reverse. They start out with a preconceived *conviction* of American life derived largely from our movies (now bringing Suburbia, U.S.A. to many a remote village), and they like us—or think they do—without knowing us. But: when they have the opportunity to come in actual contact, they are often, I found, dismayed; we turn out to be not at all as they had thought. And the "fault" is ours, for failing them—for it is the peculiar nature of the Spaniard that he can never admit, even to himself,

to being in error. Result: disillusion becomes compounded, quite illogically, with resentment!

Despite the growing influx of tourists, so far only a tiny segment of the population has had any actual contact with Americans on the spot. Among these is a friend of mine, a writer who lives in an apartment building on the outskirts of Madrid filled largely with American families. He told me that he and his Spanish neighbors were "disappointed" in the Americans. We are "reserved" and "cold." They had expected us to be easy-to-know people who in quick, casual acquaintanceship would break down some of the formality of Spanish society and have a generally "democratic" influence. Instead, the Americans ignored them and reserved their offhand ways and friendly overtures for fellow Americans in the building.

The most obvious obstacle to mutual understanding is, of course, the language. Those Americans who complain that they can't "get to know" Spaniards socially can blame, in part, this barrier which they are unable, or unwilling, to surmount. But the chasm between us extends far beyond the inability to communicate. Even those fluent in the language find it almost impossible to be on truly familiar terms with a Spaniard.

In Spain strangers speak to strangers with a spontaneity our own people lack, but—except for a few young intellectuals freed from many of the old constraints—the truth is that Spaniards simply are not easy to know.

They cannot entertain informally or accept new friends into their lives in the casual way of Americans. (The exceptions to this sweeping generalization provided some of my most delightful experiences in Spain.) The cordiality that makes a visitor to this land feel an honored guest is usually brought up short at the doorstep of the Spanish home. Few, other than closest friends and relatives, are invited into the privacy of the Spaniard's family life.

It is this Oriental reserve—the deep, inner compartment rarely opened to the outsider—that constitutes the greatest impasse in our efforts to know these people. The Spaniard always manages to remain just a little apart. You have the disconcerting feeling that there's never a moment when, without warning, your closest Spanish friend might

not sit back and regard you with complete detachment.

No matter how hard we try to understand them, they withhold just enough of themselves to keep us baffled. One can be completely lost on this country, make every effort to conform to its customs—and still be left out in the cold by the Spaniards. It is that business of being *impático* to them, or *antipático*; and if you're *antipático* there's not a thing in the world you can do about it.

The warm-weather invasion by tourists is a bane to the more permanent American residents, but their real dismay is at the thought of large American colonies around the new bases. "We all know by now that the effect of Americans in any quantity on any local scene can only be bad," one expatriate told me morosely.

It is the sincere concern of our Military Mission to make the presence of the Americans as painless as possible for the Spaniards. Any report of disorderly conduct on the part of personnel under its jurisdiction results in summary dismissal of the offender to the States. Newcomers receive a mimeographed briefing on the customs of the land. This makes special point of covering the attitude of the Spaniard toward his women. Stemming from the days of Moslem harems, this is strictly hands-off. And they mean it.

Other Americans who do not make themselves popular are tourists who tactlessly exclaim how cheap everything is in Spain; those who deride the dilapidated taxis, flimsy elevators, and electricity shortages; secretaries in the American offices whose queenly splurging of dollars, "doubled" in value by the favorable exchange, shows up the pathetic wages of the Spanish employees working beside them; and—worst of all—Americans who insist upon comparing Spanish and American ways.

Seeds for future resentment, all too familiar wherever we go, have already been plentifully scattered by Americans in Spain, guilty in most cases of no greater offense than thoughtlessness.

It may be sheer good luck that we have enjoyed the popularity that we have had with the Spaniards. Xenophobia—hatred of foreigners—is strong in Spain. Foreigners "bring trouble." Spaniards feel they

have ample reason to distrust the rest of Europe. Throughout history, they hold, France and England have conspired to maintain, mainly by trying to prolong debilitating wars, a weak Spain. "All foreigners are Frenchmen"—i.e. suspect.

Spaniards do not by nature tend to like anyone. They do not even like each other. And yet up until the early 1950's they apparently accorded us the liking which Americans so earnestly crave from the rest of the world—and almost nowhere receive. With these people military strength and success command respect; at the end of World War II the United States automatically rated high.

Today their attitude is not so sanguine. The unhappy record of our foreign policy abroad and the opportunity the Spaniards have had to study us intimately, plus the hypersensitivity of these proud people in their new role as a debtor nation, cause one to catch growing criticism and even contempt in brooding Spanish eyes. How long before Americans in Spain are openly resented may only be a matter of time.

The Spaniard—particularly the unsophisticated Spaniard off the mainly traveled tourist routes—still responds with heart-warming graciousness to any encounter with Americans. Elsewhere, the courtesy accorded us is likely to be little more than the Spaniard's automatic adherence to form, which should not be mistaken for friendliness. Bitterness, resentment, and a growing scorn lie very close, I found, beneath the surface politeness.

"With a Spaniard the first instinct is good," an exporter in Barcelona said a little sadly. "It is only on second thought that he becomes critical or corrupt." He added: "If we like you today, it is because you are still a novelty. But you should know that we Spaniards are not constant—"

Few of the Spaniards I talked with were optimistic about future accord. "Our relations are good today," I was told again and again, "but they will not improve."

One popular complaint against us is that we have brought inflation. American aid and tourist expenditures have indeed inevitably raised prices to some extent. But the cost of living is rising all over the world; now that the doors into Spain have been opened, if only by a crack, it would be impossible to maintain the rock-bottom eco-

conomic status at its ancient level, with or without American dollars. "On occasion," an Embassy adviser told me, "U.S. aid has actually served to lower prices. Shipments of American cotton, for instance, made it possible for cotton yard goods to be priced considerably lower than they would otherwise have been."

Ironically, the United States is also now being blamed for having "maneuvered Spain into a militarily vulnerable position." Although the country has been lifted by the Military Agreement into a position of new prestige, and is profiting immeasurably from the alliance, Spaniards when I left Spain were beginning to complain that they had been made to pay dearly for lease of the military bases. "You have taken from us our precious neutrality. Because of you, we are now a target for atomic bombing."

Some carry their growing resentment even farther. "Many Spaniards are now saying that the United States is out to exploit Spain," a French engineer told me. One Spaniard said caustically: "First we had the Romans. Then the Visigoths. Then the Arabs. Then the French. Now we have the Americans."

The mass of Spaniards may be ingenuous in their concept of us and our ways of life, but top American officials in Madrid struck me as equally ingenuous when, practically misty-eyed with sincerity, they harped on *amistad*, the new friendship that is currently supposed to keynote U.S.-Spanish relationships. To their sophisticated Spanish counterparts this must sound naïve, if not downright silly.

Why indeed should the Spaniards like us? Historically, right up through 1947 when in a gesture of outright censure of the Franco regime we withdrew for several years our ambassador to Madrid, the Spaniards have had every reason to feel only bitterness toward us. But now we need their help. Singularly, in our complete about-face in attitude, the good will, on our part, is entirely sincere. As for the Spaniards, it is possible that they are watching our current performance with a coolly detached interest, and taking an increasingly critical view.

It is unfortunate, and it is all part of the changing scene—one that is changing very fast.

"When you travel to Spain," a Spaniard in the States told me before I sailed, "You are making a voyage in time, as well as in space."

He continued: "You will find that you are with people who look the way you look, dress the way you dress, and talk the way you talk—but who are thinking in terms of three centuries back."

I know a highly cultured Spanish woman who, like many Spaniards, hates the British. Recent history provides multiple reasons to justify Spanish resentment of the English, but her hatred stems, literally, from the days when British privateers were waylaying gold-laden Spanish galleons returning from the New World—"out-and-out piracy, for which one of the most successful pirates was *knighted* by the queen!" It is not unlikely that when she meets an Englishman today her stream of consciousness automatically produces the sack of Cádiz in 1587 by Sir Francis Drake.

Physical isolation, poverty, and a basic urge for self-sufficiency coupled with intense nationalism have, until now, relegated the entire population of Spain to what amounts to three centuries of solitary confinement. I was told that at the time of World War I there were five



thousand villages entirely unconnected with the outer world by any form of roads. Even now such villages still exist.

Often one has only to step off the mainly traveled routes to realize to what extent this entire country has remained a backwater.

The fact that so much of Spain is indeed "fifty years behind the times" is one of the most refreshing features to foreigners of this other-world land.

I had thought that *I* was being stared at as I drove my car through the most remote sections of the country, but it was nothing to the amazement at the sight of my mother after she arrived and competently took over the wheel. One admiring Civil Guard accorded her a very snappy salute. In Spain respectable women of an age to be the mother of a woman my age confine their lives between the home and the Church. It is definitely not customary for one of them to be seen driving a car.

"It is not customary" is the stock reason the Spaniards, ever suspicious of change, give for not doing many of the things which to us seem eminently sensible. I could not take tango lessons in Madrid because *no es costumbre* for a "nice" woman to go to a studio for ballroom dance lessons. A friend boarding with a Spanish family could not try out his new charcoal grill on the apartment house terrace because it was not *costumbre* for a man to cook. He horrifies his landlady by carrying his suits to the dry cleaners—*no es costumbre* for a gentleman to carry anything.

These are probably the most tenaciously individual and aggressively independent people in the world—and yet (the eternal contradiction!) the most constrained and conventional. Innovation is at best in questionable taste.

"When faced with anything new the Spaniards first criticize it," a French engineer in Valencia told me, "then they imitate it. My neighbors were shocked when I bought a motorscooter to get to work. It was considered very undignified. Then a doctor down the street bought one, and next a lawyer who lives next door. They were very disapproving when I drove to the beach in shirt and shorts and a towel. By the end of the summer they, too, were doing it."

Despite an instinctive antagonism toward regimentation in other ways, once a new idea takes root Spaniards topple like tenpins. The winter I was in Madrid nineteen out of twenty girls had what I call "shaggy-dog" Italian haircuts; turtle-neck sweaters were the rage for all hours of the day or night; and from one end of the land to the other the only overcoat a young man would dream of wearing was the trench coat.

Current contact with the outside world—through the present influx of foreigners, and expanding communications (publications, the radio, movies, but not yet TV)—is accelerating a breakdown of customs that was started by the enforced casualness of life during Civil War and stringent postwar years. When I expressed my surprise to a cultured Madrileño that so many of the allegedly "formal" Spaniards almost at once used the intimate "*tu*" in speaking to me, he said: "It has become the fashion since the War, particularly among young people. They think it's smart to *tutear* immediately with a new acquaintance. It's not, really."

Costumbre is strong, but I doubt if it is stronger than the craving of younger Spaniards to be a part of what is loosely labeled progress. A few years ago even at the beaches one never saw a woman in slacks. By the summer of 1954 blue jeans had made their appearance among the young set. I can report that the following year Spanish girls were parading along Costa Brava village streets in outfits—usually skin-tight pants and sack-shaped tops—fully as grotesque as any resort fashion launched at home; at night at Tamariu the teen-agers jogged and gyrated to gramophone music, ecstatic under the impression that they were jitterbugging and altogether being very "American."

Friends of mine who knew Spain in the "old days" claim that the Spaniard is content with his lot, free from envy, disinterested in what he knows is beyond his reach. I suspect this, too, is fast changing. From conversations I had all along the line, many a young Spaniard today dreams of going to the United States and becoming a millionaire; and most farmers now dream of a time when they will own a tractor. It may take a lot to change the Spaniards' way of life, but very little to raise their hopes.

"The Spanish lower classes are not within fifty years of the education and stability that would gear them to use or want modern conveniences," an antiquarian maintained positively. And yet: the owner of an olive-grove estate told me that two years ago they had put electricity into the huts of the twenty or so tenant families on the place. "Each had two bulbs. Now, just within the past year, each family has acquired an electric iron, an electric stove, and every other sort of electric gadget for which a few pesetas will be accepted as down payment—and our electric bill is soaring!"

"Spain never went through the gaslight era," an historian told me. "We skipped straight from candles to electricity."

Spaniards today are miracle-minded; suddenly nothing seems impossible.

"A month after the Agreement was signed, the Spaniards expected to see the streets filling with Cadillacs and the skies with bombers," an American in Madrid told me. "Those in on the aid-spending act are like kids in a toy shop. The shinier and more streamlined the gadget, the more they like it."

In the Spaniards' "Giant Step Forward," modernization is concentrated, spotty, and highly erratic. Architects active in the building boom are coming up against problems they never faced before. "I myself had to work out a modern kitchen plan," the owner of a chain of new hotels told me. On the other hand, in one recently renovated luxury hotel I found myself helpless before the complicated push-button array in the bathroom until a maid came to my rescue—a girl who, the manager told me, had probably been living barefooted in a Galician hut only a few months before.

Many Spaniards all at once are becoming conscious that the world has passed them by. "Spain is fifty years behind the times," the driver of an antiquated jitney in the sun-baked town of Alhama de Aragon announced morosely.

I might think so, but it surprised me coming from him. "How do you know?" I asked.

"From the American films, of course. We have only to see your homes, your city streets, your offices and automobiles, and contrast them with what is here."

The charm of Old Spain will probably last as long as its medieval ruins continue to crown barren hilltops and the Andaluz is moved to song and dance—which, barring wars of annihilation, is likely to be a very long time indeed. But when a tradition as completely Spanish as the bullfight is threatened in popularity by a sport as wholly un-Spanish as soccer, radical changes are stirring the very depths of the Spanish soul.

As the country's long history of willful isolation is at last coming to an end, many view the future with foreboding. "Keep Spain Spanish" is the fervent wish of the traditionalists, already anticipating nostalgia for the old days. The manager of an atelier making bullfight costumes told me gloomily: "In fifty or a hundred years all the people of the world will look just alike. There will be no more individuality. A Spaniard will be indistinguishable from an American or German."

There is definite resentment in many quarters against the encroachment of Western influence. During the winter holiday season the newspapers, deploring the growing popularity of the Christmas tree in the place of the *crèche* (traditional Catholic symbol of Christmas), came out with an extensive campaign against this "relic of pagan rites."

It is said that the character of Spain is so strong that the country assimilates outside influences, as China in the past has done, and makes them Spanish. This power to absorb is now being put to its greatest test. Spaniards are currently joking: "Which will most affect the other? Will the Americans teach us the importance of time, or will we teach them to take a siesta?"

The United States Information Agency is particularly anxious that American influence should be to the good; it would like to screen U. S. films, culling as most harmful those which feature crime and divorce. "It's a delicate problem," one official told me. "We want to insinuate into their minds that we are not wholly materialistic and uncultured. But you can't easily impress the Spaniard, who has three thousand years of history behind him, that American culture is noteworthy. His attitude toward our art exhibits is: "Not bad. For a young nation you're doing pretty well."

U.S.I.A. has a more ambitious program: to break down Spanish

isolationism, to make the Spanish people feel that they, along with the rest of Europe and the Americas, are a part of a great Christian cultural development which should be maintained in the face of growing world problems. "We can't do anything blatant. We do our best with pamphlets, exhibits, and radio programs, and through our libraries, but there is no way of determining the effect. The authorities for obvious reasons take a wary view of any sort of public opinion survey."

He concluded: "The most successful effort for bringing the Spaniards up to date is the program for exchange of students and professional people. . . ."

"Bringing the Spaniards up to date" may have certain questionable results. Today life in this country is delightfully personal. Waiters in cafés act as message centers, confidants, even bankers. Women enjoy spreading their morning marketing over a host of little shops, each an intimate source of information and news. Here, people still depend upon people instead of on mechanical aids. If "progress" means telephones available to all and the gleaming impersonality of supermarkets, then I for one hope that it will not be too quick in coming to this land still so rich in human relationships.

It does not take one long to note that the effects of the foreigner's presence are not all beneficial. Instinctive Spanish courtesy is noticeably less evident where there has been most contact with tourists. How can one expect those in cafés and shops around the square in Toledo to maintain their former graciousness when every day into the plaza are dumped the contents of as many as fifty large sight-seeing buses? As the novelty of having strangers in their midst gives way to more critical second thought, Spanish hospitality wears thin with dismaying speed.

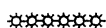
Sadly, it is the U. S. dollar that is destined most to corrode some of the stanchest traits in the Spanish character. For the first time faced with an opportunity to acquire money, Spaniards heretofore indifferent to it are showing a new interest. Often it is ourselves who are unwittingly to blame for the change. Driving in the country one afternoon with two American friends, we stopped at the sight of a picturesque group beside the road. Two mules were unhitched from



a round-topped cart in whose shadow three peasants were resting, their homely possessions scattered around them. One man was alternately cutting a piece of melon for his mules and for his companions; when we got out to take a photograph, he courteously extended the next slice to us. Before we departed, one of our party distributed five-peseta notes among them. The corruption was launched: the next

time they would half-expect to be paid; and then, like the tourist-wise gypsies of Granada, they would be demanding it. In such ways are the Spaniards now being "contaminated" by contact with the outside world.

It is very likely that the highly individual qualities of these people, both the fine ones and those that might tactfully be termed interesting, stem from the country's extreme isolation. It is sad to think that as this isolation is broken down, many of these splendid qualities—self-reliance, pride, dignity, generosity, resourcefulness, pleasure in fine craftsmanship, honesty, graciousness—will inevitably be affected.



"... and precisely so have ships been constructed in this village since the days of the Phoenicians."

The ribs of raw wood raked the sky like the skeletal vestiges of some primordial monster; the half-built boat, poetic in its primitive simplicity, was free of workmen on this Sunday. I glanced at my companion, a man dressed in the shoddy clothes—*espadrilles*, patched trousers, faded jersey, a battered beret—of Spain's poorest working class; a fisherman probably, from the village, yet sensitive to all the significance in the homely structure before us.

He had fallen in beside me as I started down the path to the beach, a powerfully built young man, not quite as tall as I, with delicate features burnt to mahogany by the sun.

From the start it was clear that this was no usual find in the run of chance acquaintances. Learning that I was American, he proceeded to list his favorite American authors: "Whitman, Poe, Hemingway, Thoreau. I particularly like Thoreau." We passed a group of children playing with sticks in the sand, and he smiled and said, "I believe with Malthus on the need for population control. But the Church would never permit it."

As we followed the line of the beach, he continued to amaze me by reeling off names of scientists, philosophers, and writers: "The movie of *Quo Vadis* is a travesty on Sienkiewicz's best work. I have read Nietzsche, Veblen, Marx, Plato. Socrates and Diogenes are the phi-

losophers I most admire. I am an eclectic." He spoke in a soft, rather high voice, eager, it seemed, to free upon the sound waves words too long unused. He was far better read than I. When I admitted that I was unfamiliar with the religious theories of Kierkegaard, he looked at me with a shade of impatience and contempt.

He was hungry to talk. Having established himself with me as an intellectual, he now spoke of his own life. As so often happened, he went straight to the War. He had been an officer in the Republican Army, a lieutenant of *carabineros*, and had, I gathered, seen considerable action, mainly on the Teruel and Madrid fronts, serving part of the time with the International Brigade.

I said, "I think you have little nostalgia for those days."

"Yes. Yes, I have. And I will tell you why. Then, I was somebody. I had done well in battle. Many friends looked up to me. Today I am nobody, just a mariner who catches fish from the sea. There is no hope, for me or my friends or for any of the ideals in which we believe. But the sea is my solace. I love the sea. It was the thought of open spaces and the water that made me break from the *cárcel*—"

At the end of the War instead of heading for the border as his companions were doing, he returned to his village—and was promptly rounded up with other ex-Loyalists. He spent twelve years in a concentration camp, less one of freedom when he escaped to the mountains and lived like a wild creature.

"A friend betrayed me. They came up into the mountains and caught me and brought me back. They put me in a cell three meters long by two wide [nine feet by six] and here I stayed for seven months, prohibited to speak to anyone, to smoke, to receive mail. Only my good health and my will saved me. I came out a skeleton. The treatment had been intended to kill me. . . ."

His name was Ramón and he spoke swiftly on a note of bitterness while we sat on a rock and the spray salted our faces. The words poured out with no prodding from me. He represented the most extreme critics of Spain's present regime, opposed to the Falange, the Church, to new-rich capitalists ("all *contrabandistas*"), to the Military Agreement with the U. S.—"had your President Roosevelt been alive this would not have happened. There was a truly great man!" I did

not try to argue with him; I just wanted to hear what he had to say.

That night I had gone to bed when a maid knocked at the door. "There is a man outside to see you." She said, not *señor*, but *hombre*, "man," used only for the working class. I dressed and went down. He stepped from the darkness into the path of light. "I am unable to sleep. You will be leaving in a few days and there is so much that I must tell you. In your book you must write the truth about Spain."

"Anything one could write about Spain would be the truth," I answered.

I promised to meet him the following afternoon when the fishing fleet returned. He had said he would be late so I did not go down to the water until the sun was almost setting. The last of the little yellow boats chugged in, pausing inside the breakwater to be checked for contraband before heading shoreward to its anchorage. It was dark when a figure detached itself from the noisy crowd on the dock and came toward me. He clutched something dripping in one hand. "I brought you *chipirones*," he said, revealing a squid, limp and gray as a wet rag, "and some prawns, the finest food that the sea gives forth. In the café over there they will cook them for you. The owner is a friend of mine. He was a major in the Republican Army."

I had noticed the flimsy shack of bamboo and straw on the beach with "BAR" across the top. By then it was dark. We entered; two Civil Guards sitting at a table looked up, a picturesque pair in the dim half-light from the single bulb, their shiny bicornes low over swarthy faces, rifles leaning against a chair. There was no floor, just the sand of the beach. A big, rough-looking man in gray shirt and trousers came from the bar to greet us. Ramón led the way into the second room.

Two women, equally shapeless, stood at a long, low shelf preparing fish. On a piece of tin the younger one quickly made another fire; she reached for a crude tripod and a skillet and soon my supper was sputtering in oil. We sat down at a wooden table in the corner, as far as possible from a group of fishermen guzzling from platters heaped with oil-fried fish. The owner—former dock hand (I learned), former truck driver, former major in the Republican Army—filled our glasses with the cheap red wine of the locale.

Again Ramón's words poured out, in voice now lowered while his eyes watched the room. Once in the middle of a sentence he switched without a change of tone from speaking of Falange injustices to the indifferent luck of the day's catch. The two Civil Guards had entered, their rifles now slung at their backs. They glanced at us curiously, turned and left.

He was an Anarchist, the first I had met. "It is the only ideology capable of bringing happiness to humanity. Anarchism is society without government. All should be free, and respect the liberty of others." But later, with firmness: "If we had won the War, we would have imposed a strong authoritative government to compel discipline and train the Spanish youth for a future of democracy and liberty!"

He spoke of the right of the working classes to education and culture, "denied us since the Middle Ages by the Church." Then with utmost ingenuousness he told of some wartime acts of depredation in which he himself had taken part. Once, when I showed my dismay, he paused and said: "You are prejudiced against the Republicans—against the side that stood for all the freedoms which you by luck enjoy in your country!"

I said, "I am prejudiced—against mob violence, and in favor of law and order." And I added gently: "In this country today it's a little hard on the dreamers—"

On my last night in the village he said: "You do not know what it is for me to talk to you like this. Here, there is no one. I don't speak ten words in a day, only what is necessary to my companions in the mechanics of bringing in the fish. For the most part we are lying around the boat, waiting. Hours become centuries."

I asked what books I could send him. He turned his head away. "I don't care for books any more. I have read all that I shall ever need to know. . . . But perhaps if you run across *The Old Man and the Sea*. . . ."

I had the book sent him upon my return to Madrid.

I had several letters from him, written on the cheapest lined paper, and from them I learned what I was most curious to know: how it happened that he had read so much.

His father was a *zapatero*, a maker and mender of shoes in a village

down the coast. Ramón was, to use his own expression, the "Benjamin" of a family mostly made up of sisters who spoiled him. The most intelligent men of the village, all Liberals (*librepensadores*), gathered in their home. Each had his little library, and on seeing the boy's interest would lend him books. Among them was a man who had traveled extensively. "He became my master. He led me to question everything. I became what might be called antididactic. I read all the philosophers, studied all the known religions, and thus arrived at what I am now—a man who thinks much and knows little."

On April 14, 1931, the Republic was born. "All Spain vibrated with enthusiasm. My father's friends were elected to govern the village. With other boys I organized the Federation of Free Youth. The most intelligent and healthy of both sexes filled our ranks. I helped organize the library. I already knew the works of Bakunin, Krapotkin, Schopenhauer. I was greatly influenced by Anarchist ideas. My pride was in not being like others, nor in believing in routines. My father wanted me to continue my studies, but I was not disposed to endure the discipline of any official teacher. With my books and a satchel of food I would climb to the heights and there, bared to the sun, would read. At other times I found secluded coves along the coast. . . . In July, 1936, the War broke out. . . ."

He told me a great deal, this lonely fisherman, far more than he would ever suspect. I doubt that he speaks for much of Spain, and certainly not for all who once dreamed of a Republic, yet somehow his is a very Spanish story.

All men must cherish a dream for life to be endurable. In Spain for those like my fisherman no dream is left, and they are the most unhappy of mortals. The rest are more fortunate. For them the present is an interim while their fantasies make the future bright.

Virtually all live in a dream. Monarchists dream of the return of the Royal Family, of palace balls, of a king, benevolent and amiable, laying cornerstones and performing other such kingly duties.

Falangists dream of some challenging disruption, even a revolution (of this I feel certain), which would recharge the Party with the fighting spirit it so badly needs and give it the power to wipe out all

such sentimental notions as the return of the Monarchy.

Some live in the hope that the present alliance with the United States will lighten the control of the dictatorship and bring democratic freedoms to Spain. Others imagine a day when Spain will have a "constitutional monarchy supported by strong power"—at one and the same time a king, a parliamentary form of government, *and* a dictatorship. These too are dreams.

In the villages young boys see themselves standing glittering in the sun before a charging bull, or being acclaimed by thousands in a football stadium; or, in their one suit, they find their way to Madrid's Gran Vía to walk up and down its length, all day and most of the night, walking, just walking, drunk in the aura of glamor.

The greatest opiate of all is the lottery. With only a peseta or two the poorest can hope, and every Christmas there is the enormous "Gordo" jackpot. Each man who buys part of it, however small, believes he will surely win and thereafter live like a king. I know of a dishwasher-scrubwoman in a students' *residencia* who is cheerful all year long in the conviction that she will win; with the money she will build a house and pretty garden and all her relatives will be invited. And when the Gordo was drawn and her number did not come up, she was no less cheerful, for *next* year. . . .

There is no hurry, time is without meaning; if one is very still the sense of the present slips gently away.

Slips gently away. . . .

I found a rocky knob jutting from the olive groves high above Toledo, and here I would sometimes watch the reddening sun sink toward the rim of the world, while below me the ancient town, drawn tight upon itself within the hook of the river, turned gold then ghostly in the quickly fading light.

I lingered one day into dusk, held by the twilit unreality of this country forever out of context and feeling that never could I be so much apart from time and space and man. A rock clattered; a voice called out.

A man, rifle slung over his shoulder, came up the slope behind me. His dog, the type of mongrel that is never far from the master it



adores, ran around before me and stopped, pretending to scent a hare. The stranger let himself down onto a nearby rock, thrusting out one foot in its leather sandal. He had an open face the color of a roasted apple, eyebrows startling for their strength, a week's beard on his chin. The high-crowned felt hat was without color from use; the gray and shapeless clothes were merely body covering; slung across his chest was a goatskin pouch, the hair side out. He might have been wearing the peasant garb of almost any land or age.

I must have shown that I was startled, for he explained: "I am a guard of the Quinta de Mirabel. Look—" From his pouch he drew a broad leather band weighted by an inscribed medallion the size of a pancake and put it on. "It says so here. There are two of us, and every day we patrol these olive groves of *el señor duque*. Every day for seven years I have walked these hills—and nothing ever happens!"

"What did you do before that?"

"I was a shepherd."

I was curious. "Tell me. What do you think about when you are so much alone?"

"Think about?" At a loss he looked around, then his face lighted. "Sometimes I write!" From his pouch he drew a notebook and opened it. In careful handwriting in ink I read: "My name is Juan Muñoz Ramirez. I am 32 years old. I am a guard on the estate of of the Duke of —" And so on, every fact that he could dredge up about himself. On the next page were names, nothing but names, names of every person he had ever known.

He assumed that I was French and for a moment seemed awed when I said that I was *norteamericana*. "Your country is very large, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is very large."

"And what language do they speak?"

"English."

He had nothing to say to this. I asked him if he were curious about the world beyond the distant range of mountains. A dazed look. Then: "It takes money to go anywhere. I know that I will never be able to leave here." A pause, then in a tone of wonder: "I have never been anywhere. I have never been to Barcelona or Madrid, or traveled on a train, or seen the ocean. All I know are these hills. And nothing ever happens!"

"But," he added seriously, "there are beautiful views, and the town is very near—it is true I rarely go there—and the life is healthy. The life is very healthy," he repeated, waiting for me to agree.

He was not married. "Who cooks for you?" I asked.

"My mother."

I said, "Some day you will have to find yourself a wife. You are young and strong and handsome. There must be many girls in the Province of Toledo who would be happy to marry you."

He looked surprised and pleased. He said solemnly: "I make twenty-one pesetas [fifty-five cents] a day. That is, I really only make ten, but *el señor duque* makes up the rest in other ways. He gives me a burro—a burro is a very necessary animal!—and so many kilos of potatoes each week and other staples. Then I get a peseta for every hare that I shoot—"

It had turned chilly and below me the olive groves, through which I must pass, were darkening. I got up to go. He rose, still held by wonder at his own thoughts. "I am always alone. Just myself and my dog, walking these same hills. And nothing ever happens!"

Such moments are Spain. It is when you are alone that people come to you, and when you seek others that you are most alone. All Spaniards, even on crowded streets and in cafés, are alone. Spain is the loneliest place I know.

When I think of Spain, I see a laborer squatting in a niche hollowed from the granite mountainside coming down from the Somosierra Pass toward Madrid, a man cheerfully chipping away in a pelting rain, making perfect granite bricks by hand, pausing with sledge hammer in mid-air to grin delightedly as I wave from my car.

I think of a balconied room hung high on the cliffs above the river cutting Cuenca, reached by the song, joyous yet sad, of a peasant jogging homeward at the end of the day, relaxed on the rump of a donkey moving with quick, stiff paces along the river road far below.

I think of passing through the mountain gateway at Candanchú from the rich green farmlands of France suddenly onto the brown and barren plains of Alto Aragon, the most dramatic of the entrances into this world apart; of the history-drenched flatlands between Salamanca and Avila simmering with June wheat; of Avila itself, first seen from the train as I sped toward Madrid, an incredible storybook vision of dun-colored walls rising monumentally out of dun-colored earth.

I think of a cold, clear night in Santiago de Compostela. "There is a magic to this town," the owner of the hotel had said. "Have you stood on its streets at one in the morning?" And so at midnight I waited at the top of a flagstoned street that angled downward between darkened houses, and saw a cat scurry from shadow to shadow, then a man appear below a lamp to light a cigarette and wait—for whom?

A countrywoman came bustling up, heavy shoes scraping the pavement, grasping her full basket as though fearful of spirits that might be out at this hour. She glanced at me, startled, as I stood to one side with my cape held close about me, then darted down another lane, her footsteps fading until folded, finally, among the secrets of the night.

I turned and started back across the open square toward the massive fifteenth century building that was now a hotel. Its lighted entrance was the only sign of life in this deserted space that through the centuries had seen so much. On my right the great cathedral, its façade a filigree of tortured shadows, towered above the ancient buildings that seemed to crouch in deference around the rim of the paved square.

In the light of a lamp and the thin, pale moon I crossed its center. My high heels struck a sharp staccato in the stillness of the night, holding back the history that lurked in every corner, and even as I approached, a solitary figure in a cape with the darkened town behind me, I might to some wakeful tourist at a window have seemed a figure from the past.

I was conscious my full nine months how much more I would have appreciated all that I saw in Spain if I had been more familiar with Spanish history; and I wished, too, that I had known more about the Civil War campaigns as I drove through countryside over which they had been fought. I was as remiss about studying the history as I was about studying the language, hoping in each case that the knowledge would somehow come without effort. And sorting out the Civil War is a complicated project. Perhaps before I go again . . . for I will of course go back.

I should like to return to Arcos de la Frontera, just off the back-country road from Jerez to Ronda, an Andalusian town whose white houses are strung along the spine of a spur mounting to a fortress-capped sheer rock bluff high above the plain; cooled by fresh breezes, bathed by the sun, it seemed a lovely place. Perhaps someday a *turismo parador* will be made of the castle in which an Englishwoman now lives alone; we rang the rusty bell at the gate, but got no farther than a glimpse past a sour-faced servant of a brown poodle wearing a pink satin bow.

I must return to the Royal Palace grounds at Aranjuez to spend an autumn afternoon dreamily boating on the river that winds through the vast, silent, sun-spattered park. I must be in Granada, with likely friends, for the music festival in June. I must see their one big bull-fight of the year at a certain rocky little Castilian town where holes around the plaza are unplugged to insert the *barrera* stakes, and one watches from the sagging balconies of buildings that encircle it. I must hunt chamois and ibex in the Picos de Europa and explore the dolomite-like national park of Ordesa in the shadow of the Pyrenees; one can stay at a State Tourist *parador*.

There is a village in the mountains of Mallorca drenched with the

astrigent fragrance of eucalyptus where I must spend some time; and, most particularly, during the hottest months of the year when the city slumbers, I must come to a stop in a certain hotel in Seville, long ago a ducal palace; for here in the tiled, gardened patios it is always cool and quiet, with the drip of a fountain from an inner, shadowed courtyard to hint the deeper, withdrawn, semi-Eastern world that is the very heart of Spain few foreigners can touch.

For the attraction of this strange land is in what it holds from us, the secret that diffuses with a mystery its bleak and angry landscapes, the crumbling towns, and even busy city streets.



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